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**Taiwanese Identity and the Performing Arts:  
the Development of Programming  
at the National Performing Arts Centre**

by

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arts Management

July 2020

## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_

## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the correlation between changes in Taiwanese identity and presentations of the performing arts at Taiwan's National Performing Arts Centre, formerly the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre, an institution that operates at arm's-length from the Government. It also investigates the way the Centre operates in relation to national cultural policy. The evolution of Taiwanese identity and government cultural policy between 1949 and 2017 is analysed with a special focus on 1987-2017 to see whether any changes are reflected in the Centre's programmes.

Senior politicians, artists and arts administrators were interviewed about the way government cultural policy is formulated and how programming at the Centre has responded. All confirm that changes in cultural policy are only related to the work of the Centre through a general understanding of the zeitgeist, rather than ministerial demands. Government policy is worded so generally that it does not dictate how the Centre should operate, so although programming has changed along with cultural policy, it is not because of it.

Analysis of the Centre's programming shows that it reflects the way the performing arts in Taiwan have developed along with its identity from traditional Chinese to multicultural Taiwanese. The Centre responds to national identity and also helps to create it. Thus, programming mirrors the development of the way both cultural policy and Taiwanese identity has changed.

The Centre is responsible to a government-appointed Board, rather than to the Government itself, but this does not mean that it is free of government control. The Centre values its freedom of operation but is sensitive to the unwritten limits to its activity and to its dependency on continued government subsidy.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to record my considerable debt to the two supervisors who have inspired and guided me during the course of this research project: the late Dr Lorraine Lim of Birkbeck College, who very sadly passed away during the course of my work, and her successor Dr Hye-Kyung Lee of the Department of Culture, Media & Creative Industries at King's College London. To both of them I give heartfelt thanks for initiating me into the ways of academic research. Thanks also to Professor Tim Markham of the Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies at Birkbeck College who offered very valuable comments and advice. Furthermore, I am grateful to Dr Jonathan Vickery and Dr Victoria Durrer for their valuable advice and suggestions for improvement given during the viva voce examination of the thesis.

I am especially grateful to the distinguished group of senior politicians, arts administrators, arts professional and artists in Taiwan who gave freely of their time and opinions in allowing me to interview them for the project. They are all listed in the thesis and I thank each of them very sincerely for providing the material that I have used here. The research would not have been possible without their cooperation.

I must also record my grateful thanks to the Government of Taiwan. The Ministry of Education's 'Scholarship of Government Sponsorship for Overseas Study' enabled me to come to London and enrol at Birkbeck College through the generous award of a grant.

I am grateful to Dr Giles Clarke for discussion during the course of the work and for assistance with the English of my text. Thanks also to Graham Ashworth for proofreading the research proposal at the beginning of this journey.

I also would like to thank my colleagues at the National Theatre and Concert Hall of the National Performing Arts Centre, Taiwan, who helped me in the collection of the programming data.

I could not have completed my PhD study without the support of my family: my parents, my two younger sisters and my younger brother.

## List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Name
CCA	Council of Cultural Affairs
CRPCC	Committee for Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
GACC	General Association of Chinese Culture
GIO	Government Information Office
KMT	Kuomintang (Nationalist Party)
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MOC	Ministry of Culture
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOI	Ministry of Interior
NCAF	National Culture and Arts Foundation
NCKSCC	National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre
NDPB	Non-Departmental Public Body
NPAC	National Performing Arts Centre
NSO	National Symphony Orchestra
NTCH	National Theatre & Concert Hall
NTT	National Taichung Theatre
PAC	Performing Arts Centre
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China (Taiwan)
RQs	Research Questions
Weiwuying	National Kaohsiung Centre for the Arts
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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## **Author's Preface**

This research project concerns the cultural life of Taiwan where I was born and where I worked for twelve years (2003-2014) as a programmer and later Assistant Manager of the Programming and Marketing Department of the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (NCKSCC) which later became the National Performing Arts Centre (NPAC). The research conducted in the course of my PhD thesis was therefore made possible and informed by this unique professional experience, which was also a significant factor with regard to gaining privileged access to a wide range of elite personalities who agreed to be interviewed for the project. Some of the interviewees were known professional colleagues, and both this and my prior acquaintance with the institutional environment of the Centre, enabled me as a researcher to build trust and develop a rapport during interviews (further clarification is found on p. 36).

As a Taiwanese born in the 1970s when the country was ruled under martial law by the Nationalist Kuomintang Party (KMT), I was educated from primary school until university in a period of unquestioned Chinese identity, history, and geography. Although my father is from a Hakka Taiwanese family and my mother is from a Minnan Taiwanese family, both populations originating in China about three hundred years ago and with their own dialects and traditions, we had to learn Mandarin, as our 'National Language' (*Guo yu*, 國語) and were obliged to speak it in school and in public. I was taught at school that Taiwan is one of the thirty-six provinces of the Republic of China (ROC), and that it is the 'bastion' of Chinese democracy which would eventually liberate mainland China from the Communist Party. This was a very practical demonstration of the way that government policy, especially in education, can deeply influence people's feelings and imagination about their identity. As for culture, we believed that Taiwan perpetuated traditional Chinese culture, and that all

the people in Taiwan, including the Taiwanese indigenous people, are culturally Chinese. At that time, Taiwan as a society had a strong Chinese identity.

Having been closely involved in programming the events that take place at the NCKSCC/NPAC, I became fascinated by the correlation between the programming and government cultural policy, in particular, the way that cultural policy has influenced what the public is able to experience at the Centre's events, and how it keeps its independence from government as an arm's-length organisation. Gradually, I began to contextualise the development of the Centre and its relationship with cultural policy within the broader shift in Taiwanese identity. This has motivated my doctoral research project that investigates the national performing arts centre's development and its programming in relation to Taiwan's cultural policy and Taiwanese identity.

**Author's statement:** most official government legal and political documents quoted in this thesis are published in traditional Chinese but referred to and cited in English translated by the author.

# **Chapter 1: Introduction**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Taiwan has an area of 36,197 square kilometres and a population of 23 million, and is thus ‘more populous than three-quarters of the world’s nations’ (Taiwan.gov.tw, 2017). Although historically, Taiwan may have been a province of China, there is a strong argument to say that since 1949 it has been a nation in its own right, and since that time Beijing has had no part in governing Taiwan. Not everybody, either in Beijing or even in Taiwan, agrees that Taiwan is a separate nation but for the present purposes, this reality is taken as axiomatic. Because of this fraught situation, unlike most nations, Taiwan has been especially concerned to assert its independence. And from the political point of view, this has meant that successive governments have taken a considerable interest in cultural affairs because they can be used as compelling approaches for the country to bring itself to international attention and recognition under Taiwan’s challenging diplomacy.

This aspect of Taiwanese life is analysed in more detail in Chapter 2, but significantly, when Chiang Kai-shek and the nationalists arrived in Taiwan in 1949, they saw themselves as guardians of Chinese culture and they took pains to ensure that traditional Chinese artistic activities were strongly promoted by the Government as a matter of policy. Since 1949 there have been substantial political changes in Taiwan and parallel changes in the Government’s attitude to the island’s cultural life, as well as in the cultural identity of its population. Whereas in 1949 there was a determination to be very traditionally Chinese, nowadays there is an equally strong emphasis on a specifically ‘Taiwanese’ culture that acknowledges its Chinese basis, but also the variety of other cultures that exist in the island, and welcomes influences from

elsewhere. This thesis begins its timeline from the point in 1949 when Taiwan became a *de facto* sovereign state.

Generally speaking, performing arts centres act as central organisations in national cultural life, and the way they are administered critically affects that role. From the government point of view, publicly owned performing arts centres are a practical expression of national cultural policy and are thus closely related to national identity. The formation of Taiwan's first national performing arts centre, the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (NCKSCC) in 1987 and then its upgraded successor, the 'umbrella-type' National Performing Arts Centre in 2014 with the subsequent opening of two new regional performing arts centres in 2016 and 2018 were groundbreaking moments in Taiwan's cultural life. From 1987 to 2016, Taiwan had only a single national performing art centre, the NCKSCC, which supported Taiwanese performing arts companies as well as introducing international programmes to the country. Yet, the fact that there was only one performing arts centre in the whole of Taiwan may well be a reflection of the Government's focus on Taipei (north Taiwan) as the capital city to the exclusion of the regions, but also the low priority that the Government gave to its cultural policy.

The expansion of the original NCKSCC with two additional centres in Taichung (central Taiwan) and Kaohsiung (south Taiwan) to form the NPAC has removed the capital's monopoly in the performing arts and initiated an era of localism. But because the NCKSCC/NPAC has been predominantly dependent for its existence on government funding, it is pertinent to ask whether government cultural policy has influenced what the public is able to experience at the Centre's events, and how the Centre keeps its independence from government as an arm's-length organisation. As the two new NPAC centres, the National Taichung Theatre (NTT) and the Kaohsiung Centre for the Arts (Weiwuying) are still young with limited programme data, this



thesis mainly focuses on the NCKSCC where there is much data on programmes between 1987 and 2017. This provides the material for an analysis of the NCKSCC's development and its programming within the changing context of cultural policy and Taiwanese identity and for an examination of whether the NPAC, with its satellite centres round the country, operates independently, or whether it acts on the Government's behalf to achieve government cultural policy goals concerning Taiwanese identity.

This research therefore investigates, under the circumstances of a country which is confused about its name, its status and its national identity, the extent to which programming at the NCKSCC/NPAC has developed in line with the changes in cultural policy and has reflected the shifting identity of the Taiwanese

Through my position at the Centre, I have been fortunate enough to know personally many of the significant people in its management and in the Government's oversight of it since its inception. All of those individuals have been kind enough to allow me to interview them about their vision for the Centre and their experiences in its operation. These interviews form, I believe, a unique source of insight into a seminal period of Taiwanese performing arts history.

## **1.2. Research Questions (RQs)**

Nicola Green and Paul Stoneman (2016: 44-45) stress that the centre of a research design is its research questions, and to start a research project, setting up good research questions is a crucial step. They suggest some starting points, such as 'previous reading and thinking, a perceived social problem, a media report, personal experiences, and observation and participation' (ibid.) that can give rise to the research project, one of which is 'personal experiences' which, in this thesis, take an important role because of

my involvement with the topic. When research interest is generated from personal experience, more understanding, and commitment can be devoted to the research, but it also requires the researcher to be especially careful to remain objective. The next step is to pay attention to the research question to make sure that it is ‘researchable’, which means, according to Green and Stoneman (2016: 46), that needs a number of characteristics: ‘interesting, relevant, feasible, ethical, concise, and answerable’. David Silverman (2011:33) suggests that an efficient way to develop a researchable question which can be answered ‘within the constraints of time and available resources’ is to narrow down the topic and to focus the research.

Following the criteria above I therefore propose to construct this research project by using as a starting point my personal experience of the shift in Taiwanese identity and my contextual knowledge of the NCKSCC and subsequently the NPAC. These have inspired the research and led to the main research question (RQ):

**What is the relationship between Taiwanese identity, government cultural policy and programming at the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre/National Performing Arts Centre?**

This question can be broken down into lower-ranking questions:

RQ 1. How can Taiwanese identity be defined, and how has it evolved? What are the factors that shape or influence Taiwanese identity?

RQ 2. How has Taiwan’s cultural policy evolved under different government regimes?

Does Taiwanese identity relate to the making of cultural policy and if so, how?

RQ 3. How have the performing arts and performing arts centres developed in Taiwan?

How does the Government support them? Have changes in Taiwanese identity affected the performing arts?

RQ 4. What is the relationship between the Government and the state-owned NCKSCC/NPAC? How is government cultural policy translated into the Centre's programmes?

RQ 5. What is the relationship between the historical changes in programming at the NCKSCC/NPAC and Taiwanese identity?

In order to answer the above questions, the study will trace the evolution of Taiwanese identity since 1949 when the KMT transferred to Taiwan and it became a state-like island. It will also review Taiwan's cultural policy development from 1949 to 2017, with a special focus on the period from 1987 to 2017 in a case study of the programmes produced and presented at the NCKSCC/NPAC during that period.

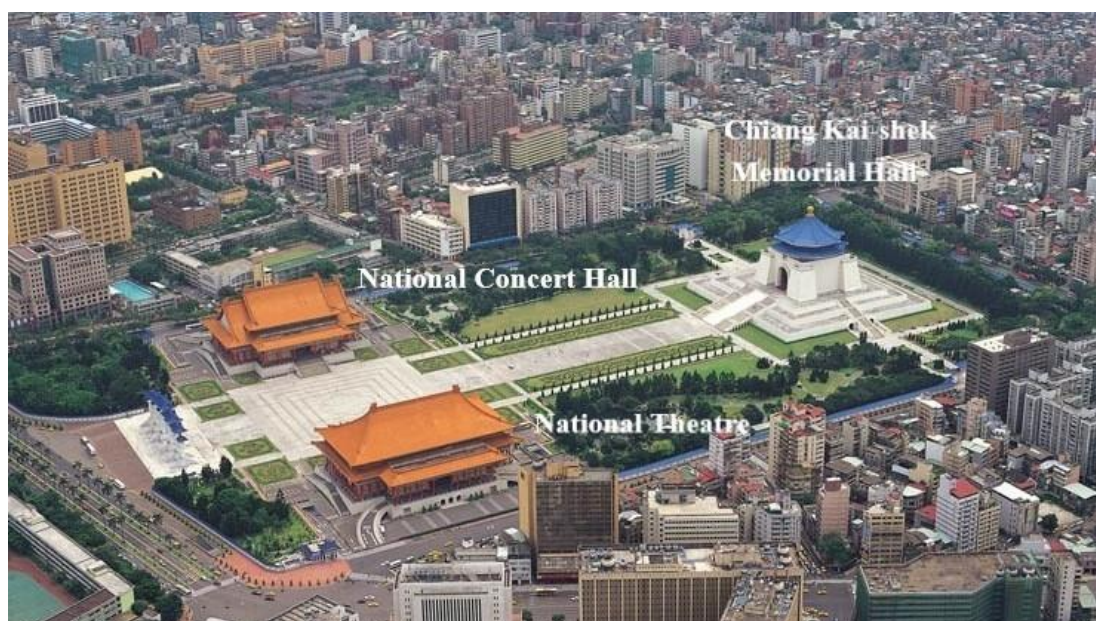
### **1.3. The National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (NCKSCC) and National Performing Arts Centre (NPAC)**

Whatever its political status, Taiwan has a vibrant cultural life in which the performing arts play a significant role. But in 1949 there was a mere handful of centres which could act as venues for performance and the Government decided to take action to improve this situation. On the death of President Chiang Kai-shek in 1975, the Taiwanese KMT government launched a plan to construct a 'Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Park' with, on one side, a main memorial hall and, on the other, a theatre and concert hall. These latter formed the NCKSCC which then appeared on Taiwan's cultural map as its first and only professional performing arts centre (NCKSCC, 2007: 16). It remained the only national performing arts centre for more than nearly three decades until, as described in the section 4.3.2 in Chapter 4, it was upgraded and joined

by another two complexes, the National Taichung Theatre (NTT) and the National Kaohsiung Centre for the Arts (Weiwoyung), to become the NPAC in 2014.

### **1.3.1 The NCKSCC**

As the main purpose of establishing the NCKSCC was to honour the memory of the late President Chiang Kai-shek, it is not difficult to perceive that its origin was politically motivated although the inception was also a significant national cultural policy of that time (Huang, interview of 4 December 2015). In the original plan, the two venues of the NCKSCC were ‘attachments’ to the main, centrally-located Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall within the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Park. The two performing arts buildings were opened in 1987 whereas the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall had been opened in 1980 (NCKSCC, 2007: 14-16). Today, when visitors come to the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Park in Taipei, they enter the area by passing through a huge archway, after which they see a gigantic Chinese-style white stone hall with a blue octagonal roof at the far end of a vast plaza, as though they were pilgrims coming to pay their respects to the late President Chiang Kai-shek. As they progress across the plaza, they see splendid northern Chinese-style palaces on both sides of the plaza and feel that the buildings have a familiar look. It is no accident that the whole building complex resembles the Forbidden City in Beijing. These lateral palaces on the plaza are the National Theatre and National Concert Hall. The initiation, design and layout of the NCKSCC clearly reflect the political and cultural climate of Taiwan at the time of their conception. They seem to depict the national theatre and concert hall as two ‘guard buildings’ to the main memorial hall. This epitomises the Government’s attitude to the performing arts at that time. The plate below shows the layout of the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Park which illustrates this idea.



**Plate 1.1 Overview of the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Park (Source, official website).**

Despite the fact that official name of the Centre is NCKSCC, for decades the public in Taiwan (even including the people working there) rarely used that name, but often referred to the ‘National Theatre’ and ‘Concert Hall’. As the two buildings look very similar, few members of the public can distinguish them and people normally refer to them as a pair using the name ‘*Liang Ting Yuan*’ (兩廳院) which means ‘two venues’ in Chinese. But more significantly, while I was working there to use the official name of the NCKSCC became politically incorrect<sup>1</sup>, especially after Taiwan’s ruling party changed from the Nationalist Party (KMT) to the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in 2000. Even after 2008, when the ruling party changed back to the KMT, the name ‘*Liang Ting Yuan*’ was still used in referring to the national theatre and concert hall. Eventually, ‘*Guo Chia Liang Ting Yuan*’ (國家兩廳院) meaning ‘national two venues’ in Chinese became the official name used in all kinds of publicity even when the NCKSCC became one of the member organisations of the

<sup>1</sup> The NCKSCC was the official name, but in the time of democratisation, Chiang Kai-shek became regarded as an authoritarian figure out of sympathy with modern sensibility. A process of ‘de-Chiang-ification’ (*Chiu Chiang hua*, 去蔣化, a commonly used neologism) has been evident since the DPP came into power.

NPAC. This is a strange and confusing way to create an official Chinese name for an institution, although the official English name is ‘National Theatre & Concert Hall (NTCH), the National Performing Centre’. The evolution of the name change from the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (NCKSCC, *Guo Li Zhong Cheng Wen Hua Zhong Hsin*, 國立中正文中心) to the National Performing Arts Centre (NPAC, *Guo Chia Biao Yen Yi Shu Zhong Hsin*, 國家表演藝術中心) not only demonstrates the transformation of the Centre’s role as a centre that uses the arts as social education (*Wen Hua Zhong Hsin*, 文化中心) to one that functions as a real ‘performing arts centre’ (*Biao Yen Yi Shu Zhong Hsin*, 表演藝術中心), but it also reflects Taiwan’s political and social shift over that time. Accordingly, ‘NCKSCC’ refers to the centre from 1987-2014 whereas ‘NTCH’ has been the name since 2014. Initially, the NCKSCC had the status of a government agency under the supervision of the Ministry of Education (MOE), but in 2004 it was converted into a public corporation at arm’s-length from direct government control, although still under the MOE’s oversight.

### **1.3.2 The NPAC**

Following the establishment of new Ministry of Culture (MOC), which took responsibility for overseeing Taiwan’s cultural life in 2012, another significant change took place in 2014. On 9 January 2014, the Legislative Yuan approved the *Act for Establishment of the National Performing Arts Centre*, and a new Board of Directors was set up in March that year. The NPAC was officially opened on 2 April 2014 under the supervision of the newly created MOC. The original NCKSCC resident company, the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) soon became an affiliated performance company of the NPAC along with its three complexes (NPAC, 2018). These initiatives have been heralded as a milestone in the development of Taiwan’s performing arts

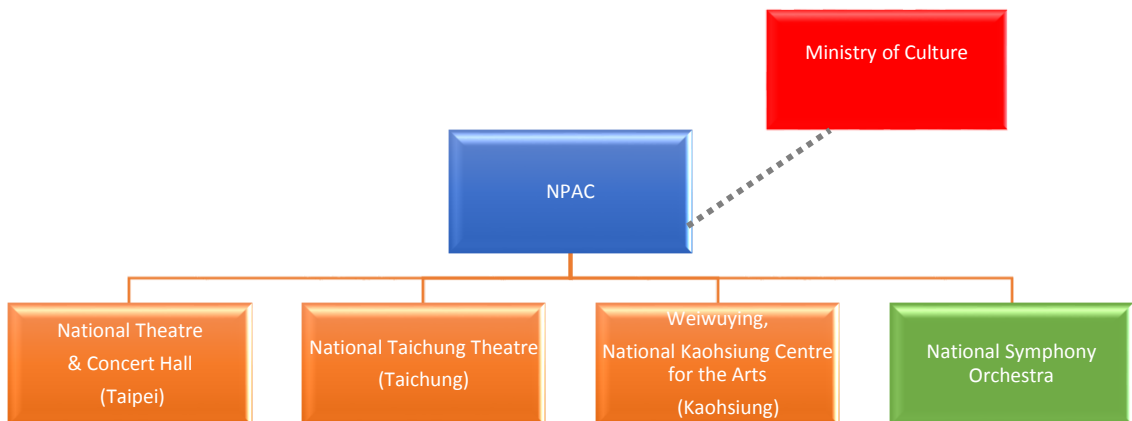
since there has been no new professional national performing arts venue created after the NCKSCC was launched in 1987 (NPAC, 2016).

Although the idea to establish new national performing arts centres had been proposed many years before, there was a long gap between the opening of the NCKSCC and any action to make local performing arts centres a reality. This is good evidence that performing arts policy takes a low priority for the Government even though performing arts companies are lively and well developed in Taiwan. And in practice, the focus was always on the capital, Taipei. While it may now sound logical to have three NPAC complexes in north, central and south Taiwan to make a good nationwide balance, a scheme which omits east Taiwan is still unbalanced. Geographically, the NPAC cannot be seen as truly national until there is also a complex in east Taiwan. After repeated postponement, the National Taichung Theatre was eventually opened in September 2016 whereas the Weiwuying was opened in October 2018. For more details on this, see Section 4.3.2 in Chapter 4.

All three complexes share collectively joint goals. However, it is expected that each individual complex will set up its own objectives to establish its own character with local connections, and by doing so will play its own part in the development of Taiwanese identity as a whole by bringing a regional perspective separate from that of the capital, Taipei.

The NPAC, as a comparatively new organisation, is still in a state of considerable flux, so whether and how it will be able to affect Taiwan's performing art environment in relation to cultural policy and identity is an ongoing question whose answer will change with time. In this thesis, although the NPAC is one of the topics to be studied, the research will focus on the case study of the NCKSCC/NTCH and its history. The following Chart 1.1 demonstrates the insitutional construction of the NPAC and its relationship with the MOC.

**Chart 1.1 The NPAC organisation chart**



Source: own compilation from the official website of the National Performing Arts Centre.

<https://npac-ntch.org/npac/about.html>, accessed 20 February 2018.

## **1.4 Research Themes**

This thesis unfolds under the conceptual framework of three research themes: national and cultural identity, cultural policy and cultural autonomy to present an analysis of the trajectory of the performing arts centre in Taiwan with its programming. In the chapters that follow, each theme will start with a literature review and then focus on the Taiwanese context and the NCKSCC/NPAC. It will also show the interconnections between the different themes.

### **1.4.1 National and Cultural Identity**

Warren Kidd (2002: 25) explains ‘identity’ by introducing Richard Jenkins’s (1966) idea of knowing who we are, stating that it is about how people understand who they themselves are and, in contrast, who others are. When it comes to an individual or a group of people, there is gender identity, sexual identity, political identity, cultural identity, national identity and so on. Anthony D. Smith (2001: 18) introduces the



concept of ‘levels of identity’ which characterises how people in the contemporary world have ‘multiple identities’ and can shift from one to another easily with varying circumstances.

The collective Taiwanese identity has been interwoven from both its divergent national identity and evolved cultural identity through its complex history. Indigenous Taiwanese people have lived on the island as tribal societies for thousands of years before a succession of different colonial and Chinese regimes ruled there until the KMT’s arrival in 1949 and the modern state was formed (Academia Sinica, 2014). Over the past 70 years, the historical changes of sovereignty, politics and diplomacy have deeply influenced Taiwanese people in every respect. But their diplomatic isolation has also promoted national solidarity and fostered a feeling of Taiwanese identity. Since the onset of democracy in Taiwan in 1996, the concept of ‘Taiwanese multiculturalism’ (*Taiwan duo yuan wen hua*, 台灣多元文化- Paragraph 9 of Article 10, *The Amendment of the Constitution of the Republic of China*, 1997) with its five ethnic groups has become politically accepted, even though there is a huge disparity in the size of the populations between the majority and minority groups. As a result, there is increasing awareness and acceptance of the hybrid nature of a specifically Taiwanese identity and this is now the consensus in Taiwanese society. This influence has not only affected politics, but also education and culture and is changing the face of Taiwan (Lee, 2006).

Eric Hobsbawm’s idea of ‘invented traditions’ for the formation of a nation, and Benedict Anderson’s (2006) concept of nationalism as ‘imagined communities’ can be applied to Taiwanese identity as they describe how Taiwanese people come to a consensus regarding or imagining who they are. In this sense, the Taiwanese people are a disparate group trying to find a settled position for themselves in the world. Taiwanese identity is a moving, fluid and dynamic concept that, according to Stuart

Hall (1996), is a process of ‘becoming’. This thesis will explore Taiwan’s identity and its evolution, and examine the cultural identity shift from ‘Chinese’ to ‘Taiwanese’. It will investigate how this development has influenced government cultural policy, and also whether that has affected the programming of the NCKSCC/NPAC.

### **1.4.2 Cultural Policy**

Public or government policy with respect to culture forms what may be termed ‘cultural policy’ which implies cultural plans and strategies that governments develop. Cultural policy, then involves government promotion of ‘the production, dissemination, marketing, and consumption of the arts’ (Rentschler, 2002: 17). It is possible to define the word culture in a broad, inclusive way or a much narrower way. Culture is all too often immediately associated with the high arts. But these days, it is normal for governments to think of culture in a broad sense and one commonly used definition is Raymond Williams’s (1958, 1983) assertion that culture is ‘a whole way of life’.

Toby Miller and George Yudice (2002: 9) argue that cultural policies are a form of ‘hegemony’ that is secured when ‘the dominant culture uses education, philosophy, religion, aesthetics and art to make its dominance appear normal and natural to the heterogeneous groups that constitute society’. This view corresponds closely to Taiwan’s situation with its majority ethnic composition of Han Taiwanese. Thus, examining how cultural policy changes from year to year illuminates the way that society is changing and is a reflection of cultural identity. Although it is commonly regarded that ‘high culture’ cannot represent the complete spectrum of culture, it is irrefutable that throughout the world the arts sit in an important position with respect to government cultural policy. Oliver Bennett (2009: 70) explains that a government’s

reason for engaging with the arts depends on how it can ‘justify its actions on the basis of the contributions the arts are said to make to the society’. This kind of relationship between a government and its decisions about which cultural and arts activities it is prepared to support is becoming a constant across the globe.

In Taiwan, political ideology and national identity influence the making of cultural policy through changes in the party in government power and this has an impact on cultural identity. After the central government of the ROC transferred to Taiwan in 1949, the KMT’s Committee for Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture (CRPCC) played a central role in cultural policymaking during Taiwan’s authoritarian period of single-party rule (Tchen, 2013: 31). For almost two decades, there was no government organisation directly in charge of cultural affairs in Taiwan until the Cultural Bureau was established under the MOE in 1967, and later the Council of Cultural Affairs (CCA) was established in 1981 (Tchen, 2013: 30-31). Taiwan’s Ministry of Culture was eventually upgraded from the CCA in 2012. Founded in 1996, Taiwan’s National Culture and Arts Foundation (NCAF) is now also involved in cultural affairs through holding the purse strings for ‘research and development, grants, awards, and resource development’ (NCAF, 2016).

The way in which Taiwan’s cultural policy has been implemented through its various government agencies and the NPAC is a key focus of this research which aims to discover and to provide an insight into how both the Government and the NPAC have influenced the country’s identity.

### **1.4.3 Cultural Autonomy**

A state’s cultural policy demonstrates in a positive way how government is involved with and supports culture, but on the other hand, it might also express a government’s

ambition to influence and even dictate cultural affairs especially through its grant-making activities. The first Minister of Taiwan's Ministry of Culture, Lung Ying-tai (2008) argued that the liberty of the people is an important feature of a country's cultural life, and that by having a cultural 'policy' the government might restrict that liberty. Derrick Chong (2010: 33) claims that when the government subsidises a major proportion of the country's artistic activity, there is always a risk of government intervention, or even control of the arts. Cultural autonomy is therefore a crucial factor in researching the balance between the state and the arts.

This thesis focuses on 'institutional autonomy' of the arts, and thus of the NCKSCC/NPAC, which deals with the occurrences under which publicly funded institutions operate with their own goals, objectives and decisions for their own productions, in a way that is 'immune from the arbitrary exercise of the authority by external power holders' (Vestheim, 2009: 37). One of the ways in which institutional autonomy can be maintained is the so-called 'arm's-length' principle which 'is implicit in the constitutional separation of powers between the judiciary, executive and legislative branches of government' (Hillman-Cartrand & McCaughey, 1989). In the area of the arts, the implementation of the arm's-length principle is intended to solve the problem of government control and to make sure that public arts organisations are independent and unaffected from undue government influence (Blomgren, 2012: 522).

The NCKSCC was the first public corporation in Taiwan to be set up by the Government under the arm's-length principle. In doing so it followed the example of Japan's 'Independent administrative corporations' and the UK's 'Non-Departmental Public Body' (NDPB) (Directorate-General of Personnel Administration, 2017). The aim was to encourage independence, freedom and effectiveness by distancing the organisation from government restrictions. Since 2004 the NCKSCC and subsequently the NPAC, possessing both financial protection and autonomous operation, have been

able to develop their own programming and have promoted Taiwan's image and strength through the performing arts.

According to the founding legislation of the NCKSCC and NPAC, the Board should be composed of between eleven and fifteen Directors who are selected and recommended by the MOE/MOC, but are appointed by the Premier of the Executive Yuan. Apart from scholars, experts in the performing arts (up to four members), education and cultural academics (up to four members), and professional operators and managers (up to four members), who comprise the majority of the Board, the Government appoints its own three representatives (Laws & Regulations Database of the ROC, 2016). Appointment of Board members by the Government potentially compromises the arm's-length principle and it might increase the possibilities of the interference from the Government. Thus, the key question is whether the 'length' of the arm is adequate to secure independence (Mundy, 2000, 33) while the Government is the paymaster and controls the Centre's budget. This research will investigate the relationship between the NCKSCC/NPAC and the Government, how Taiwanese identity interacts with the programming at the NCKSCC/NPAC and the extent to which it is influenced by government cultural policy.

## **1.5 Research Methodology**

Nicholas Walliman (2011: 15) suggests that 'research is about acquiring knowledge and developing understanding, collecting facts and interpreting them to build up a picture of the world around us, and even within us'. Under the themes of national/cultural identity, cultural policy and cultural autonomy, the research methodology used here provides the mechanism by which the research questions can be approached and answered. Pertti Alasuutari (1995: 41) explains 'the method

consists of all the practices and operations through which these observations can be modified and interpreted in order to assess their meaning as clues'. In other words, the presentation of the research method is the opportunity to explain how the research questions will be answered. Research methods are therefore the techniques that provide an effective way to collect and analyse data so that any conclusions are demonstrably valid (Walliman, 2011: 7).

### **1.5.1 Research Design**

There are two main categories of research method: qualitative and quantitative. Ian Dey (1993: 10) explains the difference by saying 'whereas quantitative data deals with numbers, qualitative data deals with meanings'. David Silverman (2011: 4) expands this by saying that quantitative research normally starts with a hypothesis that is examined 'using accepted statistical measure on a large number of cases which are often randomly selected'.

However, the distinction between quantitative and qualitative researches is not necessarily quite so clear-cut and they can sometimes be combined. For example, one of the ways in which qualitative data can be analysed is 'content analysis', a procedure normally used in quantitative research, but which can also be helpful in qualitative research (Silverman, 2011: 64). Generally speaking, qualitative research deals with an approach to 'examine people's experience in detail, by using a specific set of research methods such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, observation, content analysis, visual methods, and life histories or biographies' (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011: 8-9). Silverman (2011) sets out some features of qualitative research showing that it is used for investigating issues where research results are not collected numerically, but as personal views or opinions. He also points out that qualitative

research commonly emerges from ‘observation, recording, and the analysis of printed and internet materials’ and warns that the various methods for analysing collected data can ‘sometimes conflict with each other’ (p. 5).

The main research question (RQ) of this thesis is: *what is the relationship between Taiwanese identity, government cultural policy and programming at the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre/National Performing Arts Centre?* This is broken down into component RQs, addressed systematically throughout the thesis using the acronym RQ (as set out on p. 17-18). Answering this question needs to employ a range of different research methods to collect data. Some will be quantitative, and others qualitative. While the former involves a rigorous statistical analysis of the Centre’s produced and presented programmes, the latter, despite being more difficult to analyse, are essential when issues relating to cultural policy and identity are in question. Robert E. Stake (1995: 37) claims that qualitative methods are used to ‘understand complex interrelationships among all that exists’. This applies to my investigation of the relationship between programming at the NPAC and its predecessors; Taiwan’s government policy with respect to culture and Taiwanese identity is an excellent example of a system of complex interrelationships.

This then leads to case studies. According to Stake (1995), a case study is chosen for research where the case is unique and special. The purpose of the study is to learn about that individual case, but not to extrapolate to more general issues relevant to other cases. As this kind of research arises from an intrinsic interest in the case, it is called ‘intrinsic case study’ (p. 3). Stake (1995: 4) explains that ‘case study research is not sampling research’ and the purpose of the study is to learn and understand that selected case. The case study here focuses on the NCKSCC/NPAC.

The main research question of the thesis can be broken down into a hierarchy of lower-ranking research questions (RQs) and the table below demonstrates the research methods that will be used to answer each question.

**Table 1.1 Lower-ranking research questions (RQs) with methods applied**

<b>Lower-ranking research questions</b>	<b>Methods applied</b>
<p><b><u>Taiwanese Identity (RQ 1)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How can Taiwanese identity be defined, and how has it evolved?</li> <li>➤ What are the factors that shape or influence Taiwanese identity?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary data analysis.</li> <li>• Data include: Taiwanese identity surveys, relevant news reports and academic literature.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Taiwan's Cultural Policy (RQ 2)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How has Taiwan's cultural policy evolved under different government regimes?</li> <li>➤ Does Taiwanese identity relate to the making of cultural policy and if so, how?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of: cultural policy documents regarding the CRPCC, CCA, MOC and NCAF.</li> <li>• In-depth interviews: 3 Ministers and 1 officer of the CCA, 2 artists, 1 producer, and 3 scholars who have been involved in the making of cultural policy.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Performing Arts Development in Taiwan (RQ 3)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How have the performing arts and performing arts centres developed in Taiwan?</li> <li>➤ How does the Government support them? Have changes in Taiwanese identity affected the performing arts?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary data analysis includes: relevant academic literature, cultural policy documents and news reports.</li> <li>• In-depth interviews: 3 Chairmen, 10 Artistic Directors, and 2 Programme Managers of the NCKSCC/NPAC, 3 artists, 1 producer, 1 critic and 3 scholars.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>The NCKSCC/NPAC's Autonomy (RQ 4)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What is the relationship between the Government and the state-owned NCKSCC/NPAC?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-depth interviews: 3 Chairmen, 10 Artistic Directors, 2 Programme Managers and 2 Executive Secretaries of the Board of the NCKSCC/NPAC, 3 artists, 1 producer, and 1 critic.</li> </ul>



➤ How is government policy translated into the Centre's programmes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of policy documents on the mission and KPI contents of the NCKSCC/NPAC.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>The NCKSCC/NPAC's Programming and Taiwanese Identity (RQ 5)</u></b></p> <p>➤ What is the relationship between the historical changes in programming at the NCKSCC/NPAC and Taiwanese identity?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-depth interviews: 3 Ministers and 1 officer of the CCA, 3 Chairmen, 10 Artistic Directors, 2 Programme Managers and 2 Executive Secretaries of the Board of the NCKSCC/NPAC, 3 artists, 1 producer, 1 critic and 3 scholars.</li> <li>• The NCKSCC/NPAC produced and presented programme data analysis (1987-2017).</li> </ul>

### 1.5.2 Data Collection

The purpose of data collection and analysis, is to answer research questions as research findings or results are revealed (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011: 33). Data collection is therefore a vital component of the research process. As the essential nature of data is the information they contain, the data needed for the research 'depend on the issue being investigated' (Walliman, 2011: 63).

Data can be categorised as 'primary' or 'secondary' according to how they are formed (Finnegan, 1996: 141; Williman, 2011: 69). Williman (2011: 69) explains that primary data are what 'has been observed, experienced or recorded close to the event', and that they are 'the nearest one can get to the truth'. Ruth Finnegan (1996) clarifies that primary data were 'written (or otherwise came into being) by the people directly involved and at a time contemporary or near contemporary with the period being investigated', this therefore offers 'the basic and original material for providing the researcher's raw evidence (p. 141). On the other hand, secondary data are normally

‘written sources that interpret or record primary data’ (Walliman, 2011: 69) or ‘copy, interpret or judge material to be found in primary sources’ (Finnegan, 1996: 141). Regarding the importance of primary and secondary data, although in Williman’s (2011: 69) view secondary data ‘tend to be less reliable’, Finnegan (1996) argues that both can be useful, depending on the particular research case and its distinguishing circumstances. She further claims that an ideal research mode is to ‘involve acquaintance with all the relevant primary and secondary sources for the topic being studied’ in an appropriate way (p. 141-142).

The sources of data used here combine both primary and secondary material, but with the former in the majority. There are four types of primary data which can be classified according to how they are collected: (1) Measurement (2) Observation (3) Interrogation (4) Participation (Walliman, 2011: 70)<sup>2</sup>. The produced and presented programmes at the NCKSCC/NAPC from 1987 to 2017 which have been accessed from the Performing Arts Library of the NCKSCC/NPAC belong to the ‘Measurement’ category and are mostly listed in Chinese with the programme dates, titles, and performers. In total, data from 4,067 programmes were collected for further analysis. Content analysis of the programmes has been carried out by checking the origins of performers/companies and the essence of the programme itself, thus showing the composition of the NCKSCC/NPAC produced and presented programmes and looking for any shift from Chinese to Taiwanese which might coincide with the transformation of Taiwanese identity and cultural policy.

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<sup>2</sup> According to Walliman (2011: 70), four basic types of primary data collection are: (1) Measurement—collection of numbers indicating amount. (2) Observation—records of events, situations or things experienced with your own senses and perhaps with help of an instrument. (3) Interrogation—data gained by asking and probing. (4) Participation—data gained by experiences of doing things.

But the main origin of the data used here is the interviews which fall under the ‘Interrogation’ category of primary data. Interviews are a widely used research method which are ‘often used to document the variety of opinions concerning a topic or establish the relevant dimensions of attitudes’ (Fielding & Thomas, 2016: 282-283). The interviewer plays an important role during interviews and ‘is in a good position to judge the quality of the responses’ so that the interviewer can further prompt, encourage, and probe more information from interviewees (Walliman, 2011: 99). Depending on how interviews are structured, three different types can be recognised: Structured, Semi-structured and Unstructured/Focused (Walliman, 2011: 99; Fielding & Thomas, 2016: 282). This study used semi-structured interviews in which the main questions asked related to the research themes of the thesis and were asked in the same way at each interview. The interviewees were free to extend or expand their answers and, as interviewer, I was able to adjust the sequence of questions according to ‘the respondent’s level of comprehension and articulacy’ and then to ‘probe for more information’ (Fielding & Thomas, 2016: 282).

In-depth interviews are customarily employed for specific research topics related to people’s experiences, for example, how they make decisions, and what their motivation for particular behaviour patterns was (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011: 109-110). In face to face in-depth interviews, the mutual interaction within a semi-structured framework can be very productive in obtaining insightful information and prompting comments about interviewees’ experience. This relies on the interviewer’s knowledge and experience of the topics, and also on interview techniques. Therefore, as Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) quote from Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006: 128), the process of in-depth interview can be depicted as ‘a special kind of knowledge-producing conversation’ co-developed under ‘a meaning-making partnership’ between interviewers and interviewees (p. 109). Hennink, Hutter and Bailey further explain that

the significance of the in-depth interview is to receive so called ‘emic’ or insider’s perspective which can ‘reinforce the purpose of gaining a detailed insight into the research issues from the perspective of the study participants themselves’ (ibid.).

For this thesis, in-depth face-to-face semi structured interviews were carried out with twenty-five distinguished individuals in government, Centre administration, iconic Taiwanese performing artists, producers, arts critics and scholars (see Appendix 1 p. 320-322 for the list of names and backgrounds, and also an indication of the author’s professional relation to each interviewee). These people included all the surviving Directors and Artistic Directors, three Chairmen, two Programme Managers and two Executive Secretaries of the Board of the NCKSCC/NPAC, as well as artists and cultural professionals who have practical experience of collaborating with the NCKSCC/NPAC, also scholars who have been involved with creating cultural policy in Taiwan, and one former CCA/MOC Officer. The interviewees from the NCKSCC/NPAC included not only individuals who were currently in post at the time of the interviews, but also people who had retired from those responsibilities and were able to look back with detachment. People who were not members of the organisation but used to dealing with the NCKSCC/NPAC from the outside, provide opinions from a different perspective from those who are responsible for programming. It is also worth noting that three of the NCKSCC/NPAC Chairmen and Artistic Directors had been Ministers of the CCA, and during the interviews were therefore able to talk about cultural policy issues. This has been a unique opportunity to obtain insightful opinions and inside information from high profile cultural policy makers who have themselves been responsible for formulating national policies and administering the Centre that delivers them. This provides important raw material for understanding the history of the performing arts in Taiwan, and contributes a substantial source of original information to the related literature.

Interviews were carried out during visits to Taiwan in November/December 2015, and May/June/July 2018. One interview was held in London in May 2016. All of the interviewees are acquainted with me in various ways as a result of the different roles I have fulfilled during my professional career. This boosts the validity of the research as Hennink, Hutter and Bailey suggest that ‘rapport (a trust relationship)’ between the interviewer and interviewee is one of the approaches ‘to achieve both the in-depth and emic perspective’ (2011: 109). The interviews were carried out in Mandarin and have been recorded on an Android smart phone; the 3GPP files generated and the recordings made have been stored digitally. Full transcripts in traditional Chinese were made by the author and can be provided on request. All the data stored is in the possession of the author and maintained securely under conditions stipulated by Birkbeck College, University of London data storage policy. The interviews were conducted according to the ‘Ethics Guidelines’ of Birkbeck College, University of London. Full consent was obtained from the interviewees.

The fact that the interviewees were all asked the same questions means that their responses can be cross-checked against one another for consistency. The interview questions were designed to address specific aspects of the research questions (RQs):

1. Policy: the relationship between the policy of the NCKSCC/NPAC and national cultural policy (cf. RQs 2, 3 and 4).
2. Mission: the NCKSCC/NPAC’s task on the nation’s cultural development and correlation with Taiwanese identity formation (cf. RQs 1 and 3).
3. Programming: why and how to plan programmes in relation to the two factors above (cf. RQ 5).

Additional data relating to the cultural policy theme, including primary data such as published government policy with respect to the arts and culture, e.g. the culture white papers (1998 & 2004, *Wen hua bai pi shu*, 文化白皮書), and the organisation’s

mission and policy statements were sourced from their official websites (see the Appendix 2 on p. 322-323 for list of cultural policy documents used) in order to demonstrate how policy has changed as different governments, ministers and cultural policies have come and gone. As for secondary data, literature covering the history and evolution of Taiwanese cultural policy has also been analysed. In addition, surveys of Taiwanese identity and news reports which reveal changes to Taiwanese identity have been examined for references to relevant research topics.

### **1.5.3 Data Analysis**

The data in this research thesis brings together data from three principal sources: policy published by the Government, interviews and NCSKCC/NPAC produced and presented programmes. The first two have been analysed by thematic analysis, the third by content analysis.

Thematic analysis is commonly used to make ‘raw data’ manageable and understandable. It is more of ‘a process for synthesising and analysing data that has been collected using various qualitative methods’ than ‘a standalone qualitative method that is used for collecting data’ (Seal, 2016: 444). Alexander Seal (2016) introduces two types of thematic analysis. When themes are ‘specifically generated from the coded segments of data’, they are what Boyatzis (1998) defines as ‘data driven code’ which identifies themes from coded data (p. 454). However, if the themes are already ‘identified in previous research studies and literature within the area investigation’ by other researchers, then they are referred to as ‘*a priori* themes’, which ‘accept another researcher’s assumption, projections, and biases’ (Boyatzis, 1998). It is sometimes inescapable that ‘*a priori* themes’ are used in research because, as Seal (2016) explains, it is quite common to employ theories and themes from other

researches which ‘can often be beneficial for comparing, contrasting and building on the works of others’ (p. 455). Also, it depends on the characteristics of different research projects. Here, it is appropriate to employ ‘*a priori* themes’ because, as Seal comments: ‘a good thematic analysis lies in the ability to develop the themes that adequately reflect what your data is telling you and to provide a justification for that interpretation’ (ibid.).

Thematic analysis of cultural policy, data from interviews, case studies of the NCKSCC/NPAC and the programmes it has produced and presented over the course of thirty-one years, generates an enormous amount of information. Stake (1995: 74) suggests there are two ways to gain new understanding through case studies: ‘through direct interpretation of the individual instance and through aggregation of instances until something can be said about them as a class’. The ultimate purpose is to find ‘patterns and consistency with certain conditions’ within the collected data and ‘usually the important meaning will come from reappearance over and over’ (Stake, 1995: 78). Because of the nature of programme data, the category aggregation method has been used here. Patterns may be apparent before the analysis since, as Stake (1995: 8) explains, ‘often, the patterns will be known in advance, drawn from the research questions, serving as a template for the analysis’. Content analysis is then used in order to analyse the large amount of programme data. Silverman (2011: 64) explains that ‘content analysis involves establishing categories and then counting the number of instances when those categories are used in a particular item of text’. Through the textual investigation, a set of categories is built up and then ‘the number of instances that fall into each category’ can be counted (ibid.). Any tendencies for movement or development in the categories can then be looked for and interpretation sought.

The programmes produced and presented at the Centre during the study period have been collated and analysed in order to discover whether and how the proportions

of the different cultural influences have changed year by year. When all the sets of data have been analysed, they can then be set against changes in Taiwan's cultural policy and Taiwanese identity over the same period so that the relationship between policy and the programming at the NCKSCC/NPAC can be seen.

Because I have worked at the Centre for a considerable time, I knew personally all the people I interviewed in a working capacity and therefore had practical experience of how those people operated and what the history of their actions and decisions had been. Many of the actions and decisions of the interviewees have resulted in consequences that are on the record as a matter of history, but what I sought was the thoughts and motivations behind recorded actions.

Unlike scoring data from lists of past programmes, interpreting interviews and collating data from them is not a straightforward mathematical process because it requires an element of scepticism and judgement. At interview, everybody is likely to want to paint their past actions in a favourable light, and senior politicians and director-level personalities are likely to be past-masters at presenting events positively from their own point of view. There is no question that any of my interviewees lied in response to my questions, they are all honourable people, but it is natural to be 'economical with the truth'.

As a result, in selecting comments to use in this thesis, I have tried to ensure that they represent not only the opinions of the interviewees, but also that what was said to me coincides with the factual record when this is available. Wherever possible I have cross-checked comments from one person against comments on the same subject from others to look for consistency. I believe that what is recorded here represents genuine thoughts and opinions and that wishful thinking on the part of the interviewees has been dismissed as far as possible.



## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

To date, there are no major published research studies on the subject of the relationship between Taiwan's cultural policy, public performing arts centres and Taiwanese identity in the public realm. This is the first time that such research has been undertaken and the interviews referred to above, along with a further set of interviews with key figures in government, iconic artists, senior performing arts administrators and cultural study scholars have been combined with an analysis of all the produced and presented programmes that have been staged at the Centre over the last thirty-one years to determine whether and how cultural policy has influenced Taiwan's government-supported performing arts centre and to relate it to the country's identity.

This is timely as the first three-centre National Performing Arts Centre (NPAC) of Taiwan has just been established and begun to operate across the country. The NPAC's predecessor, the NCKSCC, has been in operation for more than 30 years but there has been little research on its programming, its relation to the Government, its contribution to cultural policy, and especially its agenda of Taiwanese identity. This PhD research project generates new findings and knowledge that helps to expand academic study of Taiwan's cultural life. It also considers the extent to which the NCKSCC and NPAC are able to function autonomously in order to understand better the future work at the NPAC. In addition, this research can contribute towards improving cultural policies in Taiwan and helping to recognise practical collaboration between the state and the arts. The primary data collected from the NCKSCC/NPAC produced and presented programmes and the interviewees may provide material for future research and will provide a significant reference point to enable experiences to be shared with those establishing similar arts centres elsewhere. It will also build up new knowledge of Taiwanese identity, cultural policy making and arts management.

Although the research focuses exclusively on the performing arts at the NPAC and NCKSCC, the arts world does not only consist of performing arts and there are other arts centres that are just beginning to operate. As a consequence, other art forms and work at other arts centres that are not considered here will provide rich research material for continuing this research into a more comprehensive field in the future.

## **1.7 Thesis Structure**

There are six chapters in this thesis. Chapter 1 has introduced the research background, topic, question, themes, design and methodology.

Chapter 2 starts with a literature review of the way in which the concepts of ‘culture’, ‘nation’, ‘state and nation-state’, ‘national identity’ and ‘cultural identity’ can be defined in the Taiwanese context, focusing on the period after World War Two. It examines the development of Taiwanese identity with respect to: history; ethnic composition; and international status. It describes the phenomenon of cultural diversity (*Wen hua duo yang shing*, 文化多樣性) in Taiwan today and examines what the younger generation of Taiwanese people feel about their ‘Taiwanese identity’ and the way that is changing in the light of the challenges that Taiwan currently faces.

Chapter 3 then goes on to explore Taiwan’s cultural policy in relation to Taiwanese identity and its development from 1949 when the KMT transferred to Taiwan, to 2017 after the third Minister of Culture took office. Since cultural policy reflects changes in the cultural environment and the shift of Taiwanese identity, it is important to examine the evolution of cultural policy along with changes in the way the Government implements its policy through its cultural agencies. The chapter starts with a literature review of the concept of cultural policy and its domain, beginning with definitions by Western scholars and Taiwanese academics, in order to provide a

basis for an overview of cultural policy. The second part of the chapter conducts an analysis of Taiwan's cultural policy development focusing on government cultural agencies and the problems and conflicts that exist in Taiwan's cultural policy today.

Chapter 4 presents the context for the performing arts, examining Taiwanese definitions and then placing them in the context of Western academic definitions so that the developments that have taken place in Taiwan can be better understood. The second part looks at those national developments in relation to Taiwanese identity and performing arts policy. It then concentrates on the development of performing arts centres and explores the organisation and governance of the NCKSCC to show how it acts as an independent administrative corporation with autonomy from government control. This leads to a series of interviews conducted with those responsible for arts direction and programming at the NCKSCC, and explores whether the Government's cultural policy has had an influence on the programming and administration of the NCKSCC. The final part investigates the establishment and current situation of the NPAC.

Chapter 5 focuses on the NCKSCC's programming, taking the produced and presented programmes of the NCKSCC as the main case study, and investigating how they have developed over time. The data demonstrated here cover the programmes produced and presented at the Centre from its opening to 2017, a total of 4,067 programmes. Through analysing the content of these programmes, it examines the correlation between the Centre's programming and the shift of Taiwanese identity. Three case studies: the Centre's Flagship productions, the programmes of the Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan, and the programmes of the National Guo Guang Opera Company are selected to further demonstrate the shift of Taiwanese identity.

The concluding Chapter 6 discusses the key findings of the research in relation to the questions posed at the start of the thesis. It examines the fundamental issues

concerning the relationship between Taiwanese identity, cultural policy and the NPAC. It also suggests potential directions for the future development of the NPAC, and proposes further research projects in this area.

## Chapter 2: Taiwanese Identity and Its Development

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets a historical and theoretical context of the research that is the subject of following chapters. There are two areas of interest that underly the question set up by the title of the thesis: the first part explores the concepts of culture, nation and identity via reviewing a relevant literature to establish a framework for research. The second part summaries the history of Taiwan to illustrate the development of Taiwanese identity. In particular, it stresses the political situation of Taiwan with respect to its recognition by other countries, and the effect this has on Taiwan as an independent state with its own political identity.

Taiwan, officially known as ‘The Republic of China’ (ROC) is not recognised as a state either by the United Nations (UN) or most other countries, and its status is therefore contentious both legally and politically. Within the last century, the island of Taiwan has been governed by a series of different regimes: it has been a part of the Japanese empire, it was then a province of the Chinese Nationalist government, until it eventually became a *de facto* sovereign state under the name of the ROC. Because of this, Taiwan has undergone parallel changes in respect of both national and cultural identity and this has been a problem for its population. The uncertainty in people’s minds when they cannot give a firm answer to the question ‘*What is Taiwanese?*’ or by extension, ‘*Who am I?*’ is the core issue in the development of a specifically Taiwanese identity and one that influences every aspect of Taiwanese life. It becomes critical when the Taiwanese people are seeking consensus about their unity as a nation and its solidarity when under threat from a powerful neighbour.

The performing arts hold an important position in the cultural life of Taiwan, and they both affect and are affected by the national identity because they express, interpret, and help to form that identity. Furthermore, performing arts centres, especially those owned by the state, occupy a vital position in the spectrum of national cultural life. This chapter therefore starts by introducing Raymond Williams's work for a broad definition of culture. Then Anthony D. Smith, Eric Hobsbawm, Ernest Gellner, Michael Billig and Benedict Anderson's work is used to analyse how a nation is defined and how national identity is formed. Stuart Hall's work gives more contemporary thoughts about how cultural identity is formed.

The chapter then considers the specific case of Taiwan's cultural and national identity especially in relation to mainland China, to its international recognition and to the self-image of its population. Taiwanese identity has been a constantly changing phenomenon since the 1949 arrival of the KMT, through the initiation of democracy on the island to today's western-influenced multicultural society. This will be used in later chapters to trace the way in which the evolution of Taiwanese identity has been reflected in government cultural policy and in programming at the National Performing Arts Centre.

## **2.2 Understanding Culture, Nation, and Identity**

The words 'culture', 'nation' and 'identity' are difficult to define and have been used in many different ways. This section gives a literature review of the definitions and terminology for each concept and selects appropriate definitions for use in this thesis.

### 2.2.1 Culture

#### General definitions

Academics including philosophers, anthropologists, sociologists, and linguists have attempted to define the word culture from their own separate standpoints but there is no single accepted definition. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2016) acknowledges that the word ‘culture’ is used in a variety of ways, but it favours a commonly used definition given by the British anthropologist, Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917): ‘(Culture) is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by (a human) as a member of society’. David Matsumoto (1996: 16) puts it in a different way: ‘(Culture) is the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next’. So, ‘culture’ not only covers any human activity or operation, but also gives a defining characteristic to diversified human communities. In the words of Geert Hofstede (1994: 5), culture ‘is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another’. Other authors phrase their definitions somewhat differently. According to Oliver Bennett (2009: 67) culture ‘in its broadest sense, represents *all* of the important factors which constitute the experience of living’ (2009: 67), while Kevin V. Mulcahy (2006: 319) thinks ‘culture suggests a process for the deliberate and systematic acquisition of an intellectual sensibility. Typically, culture is used in political discourse as the arts’.

Traditionally, according to Chris Jenks (1998: 8), mainstream linguistics equates ‘culture’ with ‘civilization’, showing how the German word ‘Kultur’ refers to the arts, literature, music, and all kinds of human achievements. In Jenks’s opinion this

suggests an elitist attitude, that connects with what is often referred to as ‘high culture’. He also asserts that the concept of culture covers such a diversity of opinion that it is impossible to give a definition that everybody agrees with. Simon During (1993: 2), on the other hand, insists that the word ‘culture’ should not be used as an ‘abbreviation of high culture’ but should ‘have constant value across time and space’.

In an attempt to bring clarity to the way the term culture is used, Raymond Williams (1958, 1983: xvi) outlined the evolution of the terminology of culture:

Before this period [the late decade of the eighteenth century, and in the first half of the nineteenth century], it [culture] had meant, primarily, the ‘tending of natural growth’, and then, by analogy, a process of human training. But this latter use, which had usually been a culture *of* something, was changed, in the nineteenth century, to *culture* as such, a thing in itself. It came to mean, first, ‘a general state or habit of the mind’, having close relations with the idea of human perfection. Second, it came to mean ‘the general state of intellectual development, in a society as whole’. Third, it came to mean ‘the general body of the arts’. Fourth, later in the [twentieth] century, it came to mean ‘a whole way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual’.

The changes in usage of the word culture reflect changes in society in different periods. Williams (1961, 2001: 57) picks out critical features in three stages: first, ‘the *idea*, in which culture is a state or process of human perfection, in terms of certain absolute or universal’; second, ‘the *documentary*, in which culture is the body of intellectual and imaginative work, where in a detailed way, human thought and experience are variously recorded’; and third, ‘the *social* definition of culture, in which culture is a description of particular way of life, which expresses certain meaning and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour’. Williams’s conclusion that the best modern definition of culture as ‘a whole way of life’ reflects the notion that whereas in times past culture was seen as a perquisite of the bourgeois classes, and anything relating to working class people should not be termed culture,



nowadays popular culture is as legitimate a form of culture as any other. Williams challenged the notion that culture should only refer to 'high culture', e.g. performing and visual arts, which were exclusively for the wealthy classes. He argued that both high (elite) and low (popular) culture are properly seen as part of a single broad cultural spectrum. This idea of breaking down cultural hierarchy is relevant to the theme of this thesis which reveals the formulation of Taiwan's cultural policy aims in 'democratisation of culture' and further to 'cultural democracy' at the political level (Section 3.2.2 in Chapter 3) and a parallel evolution of performing arts centres from elite venues to places for the entire community (Section 4.2.3 in Chapter 4).

Although there is a spectrum of views about what 'culture' means, from the broad anthropological or ethnographic stance to a narrower definition relating to what might be termed 'the arts', nowadays Williams's conclusion that 'the idea of culture is a general reaction to a general and major change in the conditions of our common life' (1958, 1983: 295) is commonly accepted.

### **Taiwanese definitions**

Turning to Taiwanese definitions, Kuo Wei-fan, Taiwan's Minister of the Council for Cultural Affairs (CCA) from 2010 to 2013, favours a broad perspective. He sets out the traditional Chinese view, explaining that for the Chinese people, culture is both the tangible and intangible aspects of human heritage which reflect the adaptability that has enabled mankind to survive and strive for a better life. This way of thinking includes heritage, customs, rituals, etiquette, literature, language, characters, institutions, sciences, arts, morals, lifestyles, philosophy and even cosmology. Kuo (2011:31) summarises this by saying that in ancient China, culture corresponded to 'humanity' as opposed to 'nature'. Tchen Yu-chiou, another former Minister of the CCA (2000-2004), defines culture by combining the Edward Burnett Tylor definition

with the Taiwanese anthropologist Lee Yi-yuan's view that 'culture' can be seen in multi-dimensional levels, with outer parts (observable factors) and inner parts (unobservable factors). In Tchen's view, culture includes not only the arts and literature, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of human beings, value systems, traditions and beliefs (Tchen, 2013: 22-23). She considers that culture is an all-encompassing human concept that not only includes literature, architecture, nature, heritage, and arts, but also includes life styles.

Han Pao-teh, the National Policy Advisor to the President of Taiwan (2000-2004), also attempted to characterise culture, and agrees with the western notion that culture can be understood in either a narrow or a broad way (Han, 2014: 19-31). In the narrow definition, culture refers to 'arts' (high culture) which include the nurturing of taste, and appreciation of high cultural activities. Han regards this as the view of the elite in both East and West and criticises it as outdated for a post-modernist age. He prefers a broad definition that covers every domain of human life showing the diversity of modern society. Meanwhile, Lung Ying-tai, before she became the first Minister of Culture in Taiwan (2012-2014), wrote in Taiwan's *China Times* that culture is the basic education of the nation which develops people's taste (Lung, 2008). For her, culture includes not only all the experiences that individuals have accumulated during their lifetime, but much more besides: the economy, diplomacy, and ways in which hostility can be eliminated. In Lung's broad definition, culture is the mind and brain of a country which decides the country's power and future.

Thus, although there is no agreed definition of the word culture, nowadays it is usual to define it in a broad way rather than equating it with 'high culture'. Current thinking in Taiwan closely mirrors the current western view of culture as all-inclusive. This thesis accepts the broad-spectrum approach which has been the starting point for policy makers as they think about setting national cultural policies for Taiwan.

### **2.2.2 Nation, State and Nation-state**

When ‘culture’ is seen as the whole way of life, it becomes the central component in defining human communities or nations. In Anthony D. Smith’s view (1991: 14-15) the word nation ‘signifies a cultural and political bond, uniting in a single political community all who share an historic culture and homeland’. Nowadays, this political community referred to as ‘nation’ may be thought of as interchangeable with ‘state’ or ‘nation-state’ so it is essential to be clear about the definition of each of these terms for this thesis as it examines the formation of national identity and the central role it plays in state cultural policy.

#### **A nation and its formation**

The definition of ‘nation’ is debatable in the view of scholars such as Anthony D. Smith, Eric Hobsbawm and Ernest Gellner. Smith (1991: 74) stresses that modern nationalism plays a fundamental role in the process of formation, or growth, of contemporary nations as ‘nationalism is a political ideology with a cultural doctrine at its centre’, and that cultural doctrine includes concepts, languages, and symbols. For him, nationalism is ‘an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining the *autonomy, unity, and identity* of a nation’ (ibid.).

Even though Smith feels that defining a nation is open to argument, he endeavours to do so using both objective and subjective factors. Objective factors can be language, religion, customs, territory and institutions, whereas subjective factors include attitudes, perceptions and sentiments. However, even using all these, it is not possible to cover the situation of every nation. Smith explains that the definitions ‘nearly always exclude some widely accepted cases of nations, sometimes quite intentionally’ (2001: 11). He then proposes a definition of ‘nation’ as:

A named human community occupying a homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a common public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members. (Smith, 2001: 13)

Bearing in mind the exceptions that Smith acknowledges, Hobsbawm (1990: 5), thinks that ‘no satisfactory criteria can be discovered for deciding which of the many human collectives should be labelled in this way’. In his view, the search for objective criteria for nationhood has never resulted in a precise and useful definition, especially when single criteria such as language or ethnicity are used, or even when combinations of criteria that include common culture are taken into account. Despite the difficulty in arriving at a definition, there is a general acceptance that a shared common culture is an important factor as well as common ethnic origin. Smith (1991:21) therefore introduces the concept of ‘ethnic cores’ using the French term *ethnie* to denote a group of people with common features such as shared historical memory and association with a specific homeland. For Smith, *ethnies* dominate the concept of nationhood and influence national identity.

Any definition of ‘nation’ will always have exceptions, so tying the word down to an exclusive definition is unrealistic. In Ernest Gellner’s (2006: 6) view, ‘nation’ is a ‘contingency’ in human history and ‘not a universal necessity’. He explains:

Nations are not inscribed into the nature of things; they do not constitute a political version of the doctrine of natural kinds. Nor were national states the manifest ultimate destiny of ethnic or cultural groups. What do exist are cultures, often subtly grouped, standing into each other, overlapping, intertwined; and there exist, usually but not always, political units of all shaped and sizes. (Gellner, 2006: 47)

Gellner concludes that the origin of a nation is ‘the consequence of a new form of social organisation’ which consists of ‘deeply internalised, education-dependent high cultures, each protected by its own state’. He points out that a nation’s formation

would involve ‘pre-existent cultures, generally transforming them in the process, but it cannot possibly use them all’. Gellner’s view is that a modern state that is capable of sustaining its own culture has to reach a minimum population size and that the finite land space on earth puts a limit on the number of states that can exist at any one time (ibid).

In Hobsbawm’s view however, modern nations are developed with ‘invented tradition’. He explains:

Invented tradition is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules, and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past. (Hobsbawm, 1983: 1)

For Hobsbawm (1983: 9), there are three overlapping types of invented tradition: the establishing or legitimising institutions; the systems of socialisation, education and convention; and the establishing or symbolising social cohesion communities such as a nation. To invent tradition is then ‘a process of formalisation and ritualisation’ which is characterised by reference to the community’s past, and for the community to be referred to as a nation also implies the existence of a feeling within it’ (Hobsbawm, 1983: 4). Hobsbawm concludes:

And just because so much of what subjectively makes up the modern ‘nation’ consists of such constructs and is associated with appropriate and, in general, fairly recent symbols or suitably tailored discourse (such as ‘national history’), the national phenomenon cannot be adequately investigated without careful attention to the ‘invention of tradition’. (Hobsbawm: 1983: 14)

Meanwhile, Benedict Anderson (2016: 4) suggests that terms such as *nationality*, *nation-ness* or *nationalism* are cultural artefacts that are mainly of interest in

researching their origins and historical use. He sees a nation as ‘an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign’ (Anderson, 2016: 6). From this point of view, a nation is *imagined* by those people who discern themselves to be part of the group:

The nation is imagined as *limited* because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations.... It is imagined as *sovereign* because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. (Anderson, 2016: 7)

And the nation ‘is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each other, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship’ (ibid.). The main reason that Anderson suggests that a nation is an ‘imagined *political* community’ is because the members of even the smallest nation are unlikely to know most of the other members of the nation and have no chance to meet or even be aware of them. However, they *believe* they are members of the nation and they live in a community which shares interests, memories or identities.

By combining the ideas of Anderson and Hobsbawm, Smith thinks ‘imagery’ plays a vital role in illustrating the formation of nations and ‘the conscious invention of essentially new traditions to meet new needs’ is crucial in their invention (Smith, 1993: 9, 11). As a result, ‘the nation becomes a construct of the modern imagination and an historical invention on the part of particular categories or classes of modern societies’ (Smith, 1993: 10). For example, national landscapes, literature, heroes, figures, etc. all combine to create a national consciousness of the need to form a nation.

Michael Billig (1995) believes that in everyday life, the citizens of a nation have constant reminders and emblems their nationhood which he terms ‘flaggings’. These

are ubiquitous and ‘this reminding is so familiar, so continual, that it is not consciously registered as reminding’ (p. 8). Billig calls this ‘banal nationalism’ and goes on to explain:

The media of mass communication bring the flag across the contemporary hearth. Daily newspapers and logomaniac politicians constantly flag the world of nations. They routinely use a deixis of words. ‘Here’, ‘us’, and ‘the’ are so easy to overlook. They are not words to grab the attention, but they perform an important task in the business of flagging. Banally, they address ‘us’ as a national first-person plural; and they situate ‘us’ in the homeland within a world of nations. Nationhood is the context which must be assumed to understand so many banal utterances. (Billig, 1995: 174)

In this sense, contemporary nationalism can appear in unnoticed and ordinary parts of daily life, for example, the national flag, coins and notes, daily-used language and so on. The performing arts are also a part of daily life, so Billig’s concept is an excellent pointer to the way they can reflect shifts and transformations in national identity through a ‘natural’ process rather than deliberately. This therefore provides a dynamic foundation to this thesis.

To summarise, looking at the variety of definitions available, there are common features. Objectively, a nation requires a group of people to have their own government, territory, history, language, tradition, culture, economic life, and institutions. Subjectively, it is necessary that those people recognise each other as part of the same nation, and share identities, rights and duties with all other members. This concept of nationhood may be imagined and developed by the community as a group in a way that is mundane and quotidian. If we follow this idea, the most important factor in the process of forming a nation is that people *regard* or *recognise* their ‘community’ as a nation. The primary recognition of nationhood is therefore within the community, and

recognition by other communities or nations is probably not a significant criterion in the formation of a nation.

### **State and nation-state**

The definition most commonly used for the term state is that given by Max Weber: a 'human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory' (Weber, 1946: 78). Using this concept, sovereign states define themselves as independent political establishments that have a government which maintains political power and legitimate authority within their territory. States thus proclaim their existence and status by the collective action of their community and the term 'state' may be interchangeable with 'nation' or 'country'.

Smith clarifies the distinction between state and nation:

...(State) refers exclusively to public institutions, differentiated from, and autonomous of, other social institutions and exercising a monopoly of coercion and extraction within a given territory. The Nation, on the other hand, signifies a cultural and political bond, uniting in a single political community all who share an historic culture and homeland. (Smith, 1991: 14-15)

In international politics, the United Nations (UN) is recognised as the most important organisation, and any country that is accepted as a member of the UN is regarded as a 'nation' (although in Smith's terms it should be referred to as a 'state'). According to the UN's guidance on *How does a new State or Government obtain recognition by the United Nations?* and *How does a country become a member of the United Nations?*, membership 'is open to all peace-loving "states" that accept the obligations contained in the United Nations Charter', and stipulates that the final decision on membership is made by the UN's General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council (UN, 2017). Such recognition may only be granted by other states that are UN



members. Thus, international political relations and the diplomatic situation are crucial for a state's UN recognition.

Literally, a nation state is a sovereign state which consists of a single nation and, according to Smith, exists 'only if and when a single ethnic and cultural population inhabits the boundaries of a state, and the boundaries of that state are coextensive with the boundaries of that ethnic and cultural population' (Smith, 1998 :86). This is an ideal situation of a country 'where the cultural boundaries match up with the political boundaries' (UNESCO, 2019). In reality, most modern states have a number of different ethnic communities and fewer than 10% of the states in the United Nations fit the ideal definition of a nation-state (Smith, 1998: 86).

The political ideology of a movement whose doctrine advocates gaining and maintaining a nation's sovereignty gives rise to *nationalism* (Smith, 1991: 74), and nationalism is closely related to concept of 'state', as Adrian Hastings illustrates:

Nationalism means two things: a theory and a practice. As a political theory—that each 'nation' should have its own 'state'—it derives from the nineteenth century. However, that general principle motivates few nationalists. In practice nationalism is strong only in particularist terms, deriving from the belief that one's own ethnic or national tradition is especially valuable and needs to be defended at almost any cost through creation or extension of its own nation-state. (Hastings, 1997: 3-4)

Hastings's idea reflects the dark and negative sides of nationalism, and the way in which a nation-state might react when it feels threatened by expansion or being divided. The principle of 'the right to national self-determination' and the demand that 'people should govern themselves' became a political tendency after World War One for those nations with empires and colonies (UNSECO, 2019). But nation-state nationalism has become problematic and even dangerous according to UNSECO, in a way 'that

operates at many different levels, ranging from extreme xenophobic forms to the more moderate forms of cultural nationalism' (ibid.).

To conclude, prominent scholars on the topic of nationhood such as Hobsbawm, Gellner and Anderson broadly agree that modern nations are artefacts that are the product of political and diplomatic factors. Cultural doctrine, including concepts, languages, and symbols, plays a significant role and identity is an important component in constructing nationhood. The evolution of nationhood can be followed in different ways according to context and David Miller (2000: 27) therefore introduced 'three interconnected propositions' for a nation's formation. His first deals with 'personal identity' and suggests that everybody specifies for themselves the elements that make up their identity, the group that they belong to and thus their nationality. The second proposition, echoing Smith, states that a nation is related to its ethnic community so that nations are 'contour lines in the ethnic landscape'. The third proposition relates to politics and states that when people form a national community in their own territory, they have the right to political determination. UNESCO agrees when it writes 'today, the idea is that nations should be represented within a territorially defined state' (UNSECO, 2019).

Whichever definition is used, Taiwan appears to fit all of the criteria of nationhood; it has its own people, territory, government, sovereignty and culture. The only exception is that Taiwan is not diplomatically recognised by the UN and most other nations of the world, even though they may be involved in unofficial nation-to-nation diplomacy with it. Anderson's suggestion that nationhood is *imagined* may well be a pointer to Taiwan's destiny by describing this island state both virtually and practically. For many years, Taiwan has been accepted diplomatically as a *de facto* state with sovereignty over the island (Schubert & Damm, 2011: 2) and this thesis therefore takes this proposition as axiomatic in the following discussion.

### **2.2.3 Identity: Cultural and National**

Living in the contemporary world with its convoluted network of relationships and circumstances, questions arise about how individuals see themselves with respect to other people and how groups of people identify themselves as distinct from other groups. The concept of ‘identity’ is fundamental to these questions. ‘Consequently, an identity is to be found in the embodied habits of social life, Such habits include those of thinking and using language’ (Billig, 1995: 8). Identity is not only the force that unites people who recognise common origins but also a vital element in the construction of nationhood (Miller, 2000). ‘Identity’ is another complex idea that has been defined in different ways by different authors and the following section will explore those definitions and then look at how cultural and national identities develop.

#### **The definitions of identity**

We all, as individuals or members of a wider group, carry our identity with us and it forms our appearance to the outside world. But there are different ways of defining what that identity might be. Warren Kidd (2002) explains identity is ‘our understanding of who we are and who other people are, and, reciprocally, other people’s understanding of themselves and of others (which includes us)’ (p. 25). Anthony D. Smith (1991), takes a more straightforward approach and equates identity with ‘sameness’. In a collective context, this translates as ‘the members of a particular group are alike in just those respects in which they differ from non-members outside the group’ (p. 75).

But there is more to the subject than simple definition. When it comes to different individuals or distinctive groups of people, there are layers of identity such as gender, political, cultural, national and so on. Smith describes ‘levels of identity’ where people describe themselves as having ‘multiple identities (composed of) a variety of collective

affiliations—family, gender, parties, confessions and *ethnies*,—and can move from one to the other, often quite easily, as circumstances require’ (Smith, 2001: 18).

In this way, identity is a changeable concept, as Stuart Hall emphasises:

It is accepted that identities are never unified and, in modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practice and positions. They are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly in the process of change and transformation. (Hall, 1996: 4)

This is why Hall claims that the formation of identity is ‘produced in special historical and institutional sites’ and is emerged ‘within the play of special modalities of power’ (ibid.). For Alan M. Wachman, identity is characteristically ‘driven by emotion’, is ‘dynamic’ and is ‘seldom exclusive’. In his view individuals have ‘multiple, overlapping, or sometimes competing identities’, and the basis of their ‘disparate sentiments of identification’ might well be changeable (Wachman, 1994: 56). This emphasises a significant feature of identity today when travel is easy and mass media make everywhere accessible, but at the same time when national borders are still rigorously maintained.

### **Cultural identity**

If we define culture as ‘a whole way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual’, then the spectrum of cultural identity can itself be broad and inclusive like an umbrella that covers different layers of identity. In this case, there is an obvious connection with national identity in relation to community cohesion. Just as a variety of ethnic cultural groups can come together in a single sovereign state, a variety of national states can share a cultural identity. Thus, the definition of cultural identity, according to Warren Kidd (2002: 26), ‘refers to a sense of belonging to a distinct ethnic, cultural or subcultural group’.

Stuart Hall suggests that in this collective way of looking at identity, there are two approaches to defining cultural identity (Hall, 1998: 223). The first emphasises the sameness of a community of people who share the same history and ancestry. Their cultural identity is ‘one shared culture, a sort of collective “one true self”, hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed “selves”’. In this sense, cultural identity reflects ‘common historical experiences and shared cultural codes’ which contribute to make a community ‘one people’ with solid and abiding ‘frames of reference and meaning’ within an ever-changing human history. Hall’s second approach emphasises that as well as similarities there are also differences within an imagined cultural community that result from ‘what we really are’ and ‘what we have become’ (Hall, 1998: 225). Thus, it is a matter of ‘being’ and ‘becoming’. In this sense, Hall claims that cultural identity not only links communities with their past but also resides in the future, and that it ‘undergoes constant transformation’ through history as it is ‘subject to the continuous “play” of history, culture, and power’. Hall’s view is that ‘identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past’ (ibid.).

On the other hand, Vivian Hsueh-Hua Chen, from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, claims that the formation of cultural identity involves a process of sharing collective knowledge of tradition, heritage, religion and so on (Chen, 2014). But she also argues that the study of cultural identity began in Western academia and therefore applies primarily to Western nations with their mixed historical backgrounds. As a result, the mainstream concepts of cultural identity are not entirely applicable to the social and cultural trajectories in other parts of the world, such as Asian countries where some nation-states contain relatively homogenous ethnic communities. She suggests that ‘enhancing and sharing vernacular knowledge rooted in non-Western

cultures will lead to further refinement of the concept (of cultural identity)' (ibid.).

Smith is also aware of this phenomenon:

Genealogy and presumed descent ties, popular mobilisation, vernacular languages, customs and traditions, these are the element of an alternative, ethnic conception of the nation, one that mirrored the very different route of nation-formation travelled by many communities in Eastern Europe and Asia and one that constituted a dynamic political challenge. (Smith, 1991:12-13)

Looking more closely at the influence of this ethnic factor which stresses the 'birth' and 'native culture' of a community, Smith identifies distinct ways of looking at national identity: Western and non-Western. In the former, an individual could choose which nation to belong to, no matter what their ethnic background. In the latter, ethnicity is everything and even after emigration, an individual is perceived as belonging to his or her birth nation. 'A nation was first and foremost a community of common descent' (Smith, 1991:11). This phenomenon is very apparent in the Chinese-speaking world where ethnic Chinese who happen to live in different states still regard themselves and are regarded by others as having Chinese cultural or national identity. This is very significant in Taiwan and crucially affects the formation of 'Taiwanese identity'.

Smith emphasises the importance of the ethnic ties and identity links that are the cultural foundation of a community and which form the basis of a nation. He illustrates two types of ethnic communities (*ethnies*): the lateral and the vertical<sup>3</sup>. In a lateral

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<sup>3</sup> According to Anthony D. Smith (1991: 53), the lateral *ethnie* 'was usually composed of aristocrats and higher clergy, though it might from time to time include bureaucrats, high military officials and the richer merchants. It is termed lateral because it was at once socially confined to upper strata while being geographically spread out to form often close links with upper echelons of neighbouring lateral *ethnie*'. The vertical *ethnie* 'was more compact and popular. Its ethnic culture tended to be diffused to other social strata and classes. Social divisions were not underpinned by cultural differences: rather, a distinctive historical culture helped to unite different classes around a common heritage and traditions, especially when the latter were under threat from outside'.

*ethnie*, the dominant upper social strata confine themselves to their own circle and fail to integrate with other strata of the community; when they disperse, they move to the same upper strata of neighbouring lateral *ethnies*. In this mode, allegiance to the state takes precedence over ethnic ties and Smith claims that lateral *ethnies* tend to produce ‘civic’ nations, such as France, Spain, England and other west European states. Vertical *ethnies*, on the other hand, exist across all social strata. They share a persistent historical culture which can survive across long periods of time, as they have in Greece and Catholic Ireland (Smith, 1991:52-54). The ‘*Zhonghua*’<sup>4</sup> (中華, Chinese) culture can be categorised as a vertical *ethnie* which is ancient, but still viable and able to influence the formation of national and cultural identities without preventing the establishment of modern states.

### **National identity**

In simple terms, ‘national identity’ refers to the people of a nation who recognise and share a common perception of the identity of that nation. From the formative elements of a nation described above, the fundamental features of national identity consist of the history, symbols, traditions, values, legal rights and, most importantly, the culture of the nation. Thus ‘any attempt to forge a national identity is also a political action with political consequences’ (Smith, 1991: 99). This necessary connection between cultural and political identities is often the origin of conflict within or between states. Roxanne L. Doty believes that ‘national identity is arguably one of the more

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<sup>4</sup> *Zhonghua* (中華) is a Chinese term for the historical concept of the Chinese nation and civilization. The official names of both the ROC (*Zhonghua Minguo*, 中華民國) and the PRC (*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo*, 中华人民共和国) contain *Zhonghua*, but it indicates the civilization and is not limited to the state of *Zhongguo* (China, 中國). *Zhonghua* remains a border perspective and mainly designates ‘Chinese culture, or cultural accomplishments of Chinese people’. ‘With its focus on culture, *Zhonghua* is often disguised as a less ideologically encumbered and hence safer choice than, for example, *Zhongguo*’ (Chang & Holt, 2015: 162-163).

problematic constitutive elements of a contemporary state' (Doty, 1996: 240). It is one of the things that states would like 'to have naturalised, to take as given and unproblematic' (ibid.).

Smith has examined the way that national identity has been formed in new modern states, especially ex-colonial countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia (Smith, 1991:110-112). He finds two main models: the first is the 'dominant *ethnie*' model in which the majority ethnic group of the state 'becomes the main pillar of the new national political identity and community'. In this model, the new national identity of state is 'shaped by the historic culture of its dominant *ethnie*'. But when there is no dominant *ethnie* in a newly established state, the second model applies and the state has 'to find ways of creating a supra-ethnic political culture for the new political community' in order to develop its new national identity.

Another significant factor in the formation of national identity in a modern state is migration. According to Doty, 'the international movement of peoples is one concrete site where the interior/exterior tension is particularly evident' (Doty, 1996: 240). Migration to seek a better life has been a constant factor throughout human history and Sheila L. Croucher sees it as 'the reason that ethnic identities and ethnic politics exist' (Croucher, 2004: 135). When migration groups of different cultures, language, religion, tradition, physical attributes, and ancestral origin move into a state, their shared similarities and their differentiation from other existing groups are evident. These differences can become a source of tension and conflict between the newly arrived migrants and the existing population. Croucher's proposition is evidence in favour of the view of Gellner and Hobsbawm that 'the nation is not naturally formed'. Doty (1996: 240) asserts that 'human migration highlights the salience as well as ambiguities of national identity' and this fits well with Anderson's idea of an 'imagined community'. Doty suggests that we should accept continual re-definition of national identity as the



norm rather than trying to halt the process of evolution by producing unchanging definitions (Doty, 1996: 225). Smith comments on the political aspects of national identity which regulate both 'the composition of the regime's personnel' and its legitimacy. National identity therefore plays a vital role in the formulation of a government's policy goals as well as its administrative practices which 'regulate the everyday lives of each citizen' (Smith, 1999: 144).

To conclude, 'by noticing the flaggings of nationhood, we are noticing something about ourselves. We are noticing the depths and mechanism of our identity, embedded in the routines of social life' (Billig: 1995: 175). The ideology that lies behind national identity is of critical importance, but the formation of that identity is a constantly evolving process that depends on factors such as migration, the ethnic mix of local populations and changing political situations. Thus, national identity is a fluid attribute of a population that is unstable and is related to 'traditions' that may already exist or be invented. Identity is not just about 'being', but more importantly it is about 'becoming' (Hall, 1996: 4).

Because nations comprise diverse collective identities, national identity is a mix of components such as class, religion or ethnicity. It is 'fundamentally multi-dimensional and can never be reduced to a single element, even by particular factions or nationalists, nor can it be easily or swiftly induced in a population by artificial means' (Smith, 1991: 11). Michael Wintle (1996: 230) has observed that 'feelings of loyalty and identity are often infinitely varied about the same nation' and the power of national identity is such that it can 'unite sometimes wildly different people into powerful alliances, without them even sharing the same ideology'. The formation of a national identity is challenging and time-consuming, nevertheless it is a 'becoming' process that can integrate otherwise unrelated cultural groups.

## **2.3 The Development of Taiwanese Identity**

According to Max Weber (1946), for a state to exist, it needs to have a monopoly legitimate government within its territory. In this sense, Taiwan is a ‘state’ with its own sovereignty over Taiwan island, despite retaining a constitution that was formulated in China in 1947 (Laws & Regulations Database of the ROC, 2019). Thus, the word ‘Taiwan’ which is in everyday use worldwide is the geographical name of an island but is not constitutionally the name of a sovereign state. The official name of the political entity in Taiwan is ‘The Republic of China’ (ROC) and this is still seen on all official documents. The fact that different political regimes have attempted to change the name of the country (the current DPP government’s name for it is ‘the ROC Taiwan’) reflects their views of Taiwanese identity (Chang & Holt, 2015: 3). History and a complicated political situation are closely linked to the development of a distinct identity for the Taiwanese population and, as Hall (1996) suggests, sophisticated history and modalities of power compose a trajectory for identity. This section outlines the essential characteristics of Taiwan through its history, ethnic composition and international position, and then analyses the chronological development of Taiwanese identity focusing on the period after World War Two.

### **2.3.1 About Taiwan**

#### **2.3.1.1 Turbulent History**

The history of Taiwan is labyrinthine both politically and culturally. It is textured and multi-layered because of its different rulers as well as Taiwan’s various ethnic groups with their own cultures. Over the centuries, immigration has enriched every aspect of the island’s life and, as Croucher (2004) suggests, this is a compelling factor in shaping its national identity. As a result, Taiwanese identity has always been in a state

of constant change making it an exemplar of Hall's mode of 'becoming' (Hall, 1998). Since the arrival of democracy, the concept of a developing specifically Taiwanese identity has been at the core of Taiwan's politics and has influenced both the cultural and artistic life of the country.

Until AD 1600, the island of Taiwan was populated by indigenous people along with some Chinese fishermen, smugglers, and pirates (Wills Jr., 2007: 85). But In the early seventeenth century, European ships from Portugal, Spain and The Netherlands travelled to the Taiwan area, and Spanish and Dutch traders set up bases on Taiwan from which they could trade with China and Japan (Academia Sinica, 2014). These traders did not bring large numbers of Europeans to Taiwan to form colonies but the Dutch regime brought in labour from nearby regions of southern China. Over the years, these workers were gradually absorbed into the local indigenous population of west Taiwan and the island population became mixed. The identities of the various people who lived on the island at that time related to the cultural identity of the different ethnic groups who shared cultural features such as language, custom and history (Hall, 1998; Kidd, 2002). The name 'Taiwan' was invented at the time of the Dutch regime when one tribe of Taiwanese indigenous *Peipo*<sup>5</sup> people in south Taiwan referred to the newcomers (Dutch) to their region as 'Taian' which means 'foreigners' or 'outsiders'. This was then translated by the Dutch to 'Taioan' which in due course became 'Taiwan' (Mao, 2014: 81).

When the Han Chinese Ming dynasty was replaced by the Manchu Qing dynasty in 1644, some remaining Ming supporters were exiled to China's borderlands and Cheng Ch'eng-kung, one of the Ming dynasty's officials, fled to Taiwan with his army

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<sup>5</sup> According to Taiwan's Council of Indigenous Peoples (2019), *Peipeo* refers to Taiwanese indigenous people who lived in the plains of west Taiwan and were part of Austronesian Linguistic Family. There were nine main tribes: Kavalan, Ketagalan, Taokas, Pazeh, Papora, Babuza, Hoanya, Siraya, Makatau, but through different regimes they have been assimilated into the immigrant Chinese population.

where he defeated the Dutch in 1661. The Dutch regime was forced to leave Taiwan and 'Taiwan had a Chinese ruler for the first time' (Wills Jr., 2007: 95). The Cheng family governed the southern part of Taiwan for only 23 years, but they replicated the Ming government system by establishing Chinese institutions and customs in their small and isolated feudal regime. During this period Ming-style Han Chinese culture was naturally regarded as the mainstream compared to that of the Qing dynasty on the mainland. At the same time, there were still indigenous people also living in Taiwan who had their own customs. Nevertheless, this is the key period when the Chinese population of the island started to grow and the island became more 'Chinese' (Copper, 2013: 35). This short two-decade regime was the initiation of Chinese Taiwan when Chinese immigration formed a dominant *ethnie* (Smith, 1991).

Subsequently, the Qing rulers in China defeated the Cheng family and ruled Taiwan for more than 200 years, longer than any subsequent regime. During its time in power the Qing dynasty did not rule the whole of Taiwan but created an east-west border across the island to separate the Han Chinese from the indigenous tribes. But the power and organisation of the Qing rulers consolidated the reality of a 'Qing Chinese Taiwan' in place of an 'indigenous Taiwan'. In the dramatically changing world of the nineteenth century, the Qing government eventually realised the strategic importance of Taiwan and in 1885 decided to upgrade the island to provincial status (Gardella, 2007: 187). During the Qing dynasty, 'Chinese' culture took over as the majority culture on Taiwan under the influence of the people who today are referred to as 'Han Taiwanese' and who share a common ancestry and cultural codes (Hall, 1998). As the indigenous culture faded into obscurity, the basis of Taiwan's essentially Chinese cultural identity was formed.

The Taiwan Province of the Qing Government was ceded to Japan in 1895 after the Qing regime was defeated in the Sino-Japan War. Being forced to become part of

the Japanese nation and to have a new national identity imposed on it caused serious tension (Croucher, 2004) as the ethnic and cultural identities of Taiwanese were very different from those of Japan. To the dismay of the Taiwanese people, who had not been consulted, their island became Japanese territory and despite resistance by both Han Taiwanese and indigenous people, Japan gradually took control of the whole island. Their ruling style was 'efficient and in many ways enlightened, but it did not lay the groundwork for self-rule, much less democracy' (Copper, 2013: 38-39). Japan brought modernity to Taiwan, but the Taiwanese population (both Han Chinese and indigenous) were treated as inferior to the dominant Japanese *ethnie* (Smith, 1991) whose historic culture was about to shape the new national identity in the island. Fifty-one years later, at the end of World War Two, the island returned to the Republic of China. Although this might be seen as liberation or recovery, the discrepancy between the Japanese Taiwanese population and their new mainland Chinese rulers was considerable. After the 1949 civil war in China between the Nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) party and the Communists, the KMT was defeated and retreated to Taiwan Province which eventually became their last remaining territory (Academia Sinica, 2014).

This thesis begins its timeline from this point in 1949 when Taiwan became a state which was independent from mainland China. It was dominated by a single political party, the KMT, and ruled by the Chiang family (Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo) under martial law. Taiwan eventually became a democratic state when martial law was lifted in 1987. Direct popular elections were held and a President was elected in 1996 (Chang, 2003: 77). All these events have had a strong influence on Taiwanese identity and its cultural environment and this will be discussed more detail in the following sections.

### **2.3.1.2 Multi-ethnicity**

An ethnic community with a common language and culture is the foundation of a nation (Hobsbawm, 1990; Smith, 1991) and because the ethnic composition of Taiwan's population has changed repeatedly through history, various cultures have influenced the island and its identity as a nation is complex.

According to the Ministry of the Interior's Department of Statistics (2017), Taiwan has a population of approximately 23,510,000 of which Han Taiwanese form 97.3% whereas indigenous people are only 2.3%. The remaining 0.4% are new naturalised immigrants. Although the overwhelming majority of the population is Han Taiwanese, because of immigration at different times from various dialect areas of China, there are today three separate ethnic groups of Han Taiwanese: Min-nan Taiwanese (70%) whose ancestors came to the island centuries ago during the Qing dynasty who mainly speak Taiwanese (Min-nan Chinese) the language of the south Fujian Province of China; Hakka Taiwanese (15%) whose ancestors also arrived in the island in the Qing dynasty mainly from Guangdong Province of China, who speak Hakka; and mainland Chinese (13%) whose parents or grandparents arrived in the island after the civil war in 1949 who speak Mandarin. These so-called 'Four Ethnic Groups', have been joined by the new immigrants as a 'Fifth Ethnic Group' (see below) who speak either Mandarin or a variety of other languages.

The indigenous Taiwanese live in separate parts of Taiwan in their own tribes and speak Austronesian languages. Anthropologically, each tribe has its own culture and tradition which are quite different from those of the Han Taiwanese (Stainton, 2007: 28-29). The Taiwanese indigenous legislator Lin Tian-sheng proclaimed in 1987 in the Legislative Yuan that 'Indigenous people are the only true Taiwanese' (Stainton, 2007: 37) but they have not been a dominant force in Taiwan ever since Han Chinese people

started to arrive on the island. Over the course of more than two centuries of Qing rule, increasing numbers of Chinese people arrived in Taiwan and eventually became the majority of the population. However, through intermarriage<sup>6</sup> with the local *Peipo* people, most of the population of Taiwan today are of mixed ancestry (Shepherd, 2007:109-111) and this has created the unique Taiwanese culture with the integration of the *Peipo* culture.

Numerically the most significant immigration in Taiwan's history is the one and half million mainland Chinese who followed the KMT government to Taiwan in 1949. Since Taiwan's population at the end of World War Two was only about six million, the arrival of so many influential people linked with the new government had an extraordinary impact on the country (Copper, 2013: 9) and the mainland Chinese immigrants then became, in Smith's (1991) terminology, the dominant *ethnie*. They formed the basis of the new nation of Taiwan, and have had a significant and lasting impact on subsequent Taiwanese identity.

In the new millennium, either through marriage or work, migration groups of various cultures have been introduced to Taiwan in sufficiently large numbers that they are now unofficially recognised as the 'Fifth Ethnic Group'. According to the National Immigration Agency of the Ministry of the Interior, up to the end of 2016 the number of immigrant spouses (including those from the People's Republic of China) was 521,136, which amounts to 2.2% of the total population of Taiwan. Among this number, there are 350,309 (67.2%) from China, Hong Kong and Macao while the rest are mainly from Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Cambodia, Japan and South Korea.

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<sup>6</sup> In the early days of its rule, the Qing government issued a bill for the 'Prohibition of Immigration to Taiwan' in order to control the population in Taiwan, and to save administrative costs. This limited access to the island to people who had previously obtained permission, and then only to single travellers without their wives or families. This policy influenced the development of the Taiwanese population since many single Chinese immigrant men married *Peipo* indigenous women (Shepherd, 2007:109-111).

Immigration is making Taiwan's population ever more diverse. Croucher (2004) has described how the immigration of new ethnic groups into a country gives rise to 'ethnic conflict and group tension' (p. 135) during the slow process of integration that leads to the eventual formation of a new identity. This prediction is currently being borne out in Taiwan.

Since the start of democracy in Taiwan in 1996, the concept of Taiwanese multiculturalism (*Taiwan duo yuan wen hua*, 台灣多元文化) with its five ethnic groups has become politically accepted, even though there is a huge disparity in population size between the majority and minority groups. The three Han Taiwanese groups all have similar cultures and customs but within the 2.3% Taiwanese indigenous group, there are 16 tribes<sup>7</sup> all speaking different languages and having different cultural backgrounds (Council of Indigenous People, 2017) and now new immigrants have arrived from at least seven different foreign countries.

Throughout Taiwanese history there has been constant conflict and tension due to ethnic identity (Croucher, 2004), not only between Han Taiwanese and indigenous people, but also between the three ethnic groups of Han Taiwanese. Discrimination between existing Taiwanese and new immigrants is not uncommon although these differences are fading away as increasing numbers of 'Taiwanese' were born in Taiwan. The majority of mainland Chinese who arrived nearly 70 years ago have now died and their descendants, having been born in Taiwan, have strong connections with the land of their birth and where they live, and this forms their Taiwanese identity. Also, the new generations born to immigrant spouses and referred to as 'new children of Taiwan' are growing up with a mixed heritage of their parents' countries. The process of formulation of Taiwanese identity reflects Michael Wintle's view that

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<sup>7</sup> According to Taiwan's Council of Indigenous People, the current 16 Taiwanese indigenous tribes are: Amis, Atayal, Paiwan, Bunun, Puyuma, Rukai, Tsou, Saisiyat, Tao, Thao, Kavalan, Truku, Sakizaya, Sediq, Hla'alua and Kanakanavu.



‘integration’ is the means by which ‘an all-embracing national identity and awareness’ is created (Wintle, 1996:23).

Consciousness of this hybrid nature of a Taiwanese identity has increased and is now the consensus in Taiwanese society. This has influenced politics, but also education and culture and is changing the face of Taiwan (Lee, 2006). It reflects the direction of Taiwan’s national policy which nowadays focuses on integration, especially in its cultural policy, as a way of celebrating the country’s cultural diversity (*Wen hua duo yang shing*, 文化多樣性) (Lung, 2008). It is now accepted that Taiwanese culture is a hybrid blend of various heritages, and the progressive view is to value the multicultural nature of the island. Consequently, Taiwan has its own unique identity and culture and Copper (2013:15) comments that ‘at least as reflected in Taiwan’s demographics, ties between Taiwan and China are weakening fast’. This also corresponds to the way in which Smith (1991) sees the *ethnie* as the crucial factor in the formation of a nation. The majority of the Taiwanese population is a Han Taiwanese *ethnie*, but this is not a homogeneous group and there are significant differences within it. Hall (1998) describes how, in a population that contains both similarities and differences, an imagined cultural community develops which comprises both ‘what we really are’ and ‘what we have become’. Taiwan is ‘becoming’ a nation with a diverse cultural identity.

### **2.3.1.3 Ambiguous International Status**

Taiwan’s international position has had a significant effect on its identity because of the strained relationship between Taiwan and its much larger neighbour, the People’s Republic of China (PRC). The defensive stance that the Taiwanese people have been

forced into by international diplomacy has made them very aware of issues of nationality and therefore of their identity as a nation.

When, at the end of World War Two, responsibility for Taiwan's government passed to the Nationalist Chinese regime (the ROC) on the mainland, Taiwan's legal status had not been decided (Copper, 2013: 186). In that same year the global order was reorganised by the formation of the United Nations Organisation and the United Nations Charter was ratified by China (the ROC), France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States' (UN, 2017). The ROC at that time enjoyed respect for being on the winning side at the end of the war and, under the name the Republic of China, the nationalists represented the whole country not only in the United Nations but also around the world.

However, in 1949, the Nationalist government was defeated by the Communists, and was forced to move to Taiwan, leaving the Communists in charge on the mainland and establishing the PRC there. This change was not followed by a change of representation at the UN until 1971 when the PRC was recognised by the international community as the legitimate representative of China and the ROC 'was expelled and quickly lost formal diplomatic ties with most nations of the world' (Copper, 2013: 185). Taiwan's isolation from the international community made the people of the island anxious of invasion by the PRC but at the same time it promoted national solidarity and a feeling of Taiwanese identity.

This awkward state of affairs still haunts Taiwan which has found it impossible to resolve its international diplomatic status, despite the repeatedly changing political scenarios in the island. Taiwan nowadays still keeps the official name 'The Republic of China', as a counterpart to 'The People's Republic of China' on the mainland. This is confusing for foreigners who are often unclear about what the word Taiwan refers to, and internally there is conflict about the use of the word 'China' in the country's

title between the two dominant political parties, the KMT and DPP (Wu, 2011: 51-52). Controversy over the name of the country is evident in the confused identity of Taiwanese people (Chang & Holt, 2015). Today, Taiwan is forced by its larger, forceful neighbour into an awkward position in its dealings with the rest of the world. Although Taiwan today is a democratic country, its ambiguous and uncertain international status leads to its struggle to find an identity that its population can agree on.

### **2.3.2 From Imagined Chinese Identity to Taiwanese Identity**

Because of its history and situation, the evolution of Taiwanese identity is likely to be, in Hall's (1998) words 'fragmented and fractured'. However, through its 'becoming' process, it looks to follow the trajectory to forge its 'imagined community' (Anderson, 2016) by employing the method of 'inventing tradition' (Hobsbawm, 1983). This section looks at the development of Taiwanese identity through the various historical changes that have taken place, focusing on the period after World War Two.

#### **Imagined Chinese identity**

Smith (1991: 99) suggests that nationalism is 'a doctrine of culture and symbolic language and consciousness' that creates 'a world of collective cultural identities or cultural nations'. It is also a political ideology which generates a political system, its institutions and its government and these all play a critical role in the development of national identity. But, as Billig explains, for most people, nationalism is not something they think about as they go about daily life, it develops unconsciously in parallel with the surrounding zeitgeist (Billig, 1995). The majority of the Han Taiwanese population along with the indigenous Taiwanese were forced into a Japanese national identity before 1945, but after World War Two most Taiwanese people looked forward to re-

joining their ‘motherland’ of China and some hoped to gain autonomy and democracy (Lamley, 2007: 244-247). People not only had to get used to their new nationality, but also needed to recover from the turmoil of both the war and the ‘February 28 Incident’<sup>8</sup> in 1947. The term ‘mainlander’ was invented at this time to distinguish the recent arrivals from the existing Han Taiwanese population whose ancestors had arrived on the island centuries before.

When the KMT arrived on Taiwan, the nationalist government gave itself the responsibility of preserving traditional Chinese culture since the communists on the mainland had other priorities (Han, 2001). This meant that Taiwan became *de facto* the centre for the promotion of Chinese (*Zhonghua*, 中華) culture. One priority was to remove all traces of Japanese influence and this led to the creation of a range of initiatives to ensure that Chinese culture was at the heart of life in Taiwan (Copper, 2013: 16) (see Chapter 3). As well as removing any trace of Japanese influence, it was also an aim of the KMT government to prevent any spread of communist ideals or influence. The Government was at that time led by mainlanders and this meant that local Taiwanese people were at a disadvantage when seeking significant government or educational posts. One major problem was that they did not speak Mandarin well enough. Not surprisingly, with many highly-educated mainlanders arriving on a provincial island, mainland culture was predominant (Copper, 2013: 85). This meant that the existing Han Taiwanese population had eventually to accept the new ruling government, and the national identity became ‘Chinese’. The mainlanders imagined that they had moved to Taiwan temporarily and would be able to return home before

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<sup>8</sup> The February 28 Incident happened in 1947 ‘when plainclothes police officers killed a Taiwanese woman who had been selling black-market cigarettes to make a living. An angry mob formed and threatened the police, whereupon the police fired into the crowd, killing four people. Widespread civil disobedience followed and what seemed to some to be a rebellion’ (Copper, 2013: 45). ‘There is no accurate count of the total number of people killed or injured during the Incident, however, the most frequently mentioned number is between 10,000 and 20,000’ (Lee, 2004). 28 February is now ‘Peace Memorial Day’ in Taiwan.

too long, but the return to the mainland never happened (Wachman, 1994: 18) and this created a dramatic change in circumstances for the generation of Taiwanese who had been born and grew up during the Japanese regime.

There was an inevitable culture clash as the Government persuaded people to believe that Taiwan needed to preserve traditional Chinese culture (Copper, 2013: 16). They also proclaimed as a matter of policy that all the people in Taiwan were of Chinese ethnicity. This included the Taiwanese indigenous people who, according to the Government's propaganda, were originally from south China. This policy was put into practice through the education system with a school curriculum designed to imbue the new generation with Chinese patriotism, and to persuade people to accept that the 'real' China existed in Taiwan, along with traditional Chinese culture (Ye, 2014: 50-51). This imposed ideology corresponds to Hobsbawm's (1983) suggestion of 'invented tradition' for nationhood. It formed a new nation in an unnatural way that was based on 'education-dependent high cultures' which used some aspects of pre-existent cultures to shape a new identity for Taiwan (Gellner, 2006). It was an attempt to force a population to imagine a nation for themselves in the Andersonian sense.

Politically, culturally and nationally an 'imagined' identity was created on Taiwan by the mainland Chinese KMT. All the previous residents of the island, both Han and indigenous Taiwanese, were forced to accept this situation as they now lacked sufficient status or influence in their own homeland. The mind-set of those people, who used to live in mainland China but had now moved to Taiwan, was still that China retained its former integrity. Those who were born in Taiwan and had never been to China were educated using teaching materials relating to Chinese history and geography as if they were living in the larger unified country, even though they had never been to that land. Thus, they were led to believe that their 'nation' was China, with the consequence that they were taught very little about the island where they lived

and the concept of a separate Taiwanese national or cultural identity was not considered at that time (Ye, 2014; Academia Historica, 2017).

### **The influence of democracy**

The year 1987 saw the lifting of martial law and the start of Taiwan's democracy. As Murray A. Rubinstein comments, 'the system of extraordinary measures that provided the Government and the ruling party with much of its real power was now taken away' (Rubinstein, 2007: 447). President Chiang Ching-kuo also allowed immigrants from the mainland to visit their families in China. This dramatic and emotional step allowed many mainlanders in Taiwan to reconnect with China as they went back for visits. By starting communication with China after nearly 40 years of separation, the process of making 'Taiwanese' special and different began. The first-generation mainlanders went to visit their former homeland and realised that 'home' was no longer what they remembered after years of communist rule there. They no longer recognised it and were themselves not recognised there; their Chinese families and relatives called them 'Taiwanese' (ibid.). Those Taiwanese who visited China began to appreciate the political, social and cultural differences that had grown up since 1949 and this brought home to them the distinctiveness of their new Taiwanese identity (Corcuff, 2004). Significantly, in the performing arts, the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Center (NCKSCC) was opened in that same year of 1987.

Political liberalisation gradually moved ahead in Taiwan with the establishment of opposition political parties, free speech and freedom of assembly. Taiwanese people directly elected their President in 1996 and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) won the presidency in 2000 to end the continuous rule of the KMT (Chang, 2003: 77). It was a new era in Taiwan in which a new and specifically Taiwanese identity was formed that was clearly different from Chinese identity and the country's leaders tried

to find a way, under an adverse international diplomatic climate, to affirm the reality of Taiwan as an independent country. It was seen as important to build up Taiwan's sovereignty, status and national identity, echoing Smith's (1991: 74) description of 'movement for attaining and maintaining the *autonomy*, *unity*, and *identity* of a nation'.

### **Establishing Taiwanese identity**

Following democracy, there have been a range of influences on the development of Taiwanese identity, especially the freedom and encouragement to search for Taiwan-based knowledge and a Taiwan-centred history. Ann Heylen (2011: 21) describes this as an 'escape from the Chinese-based prospect' and 'leaving the "imagined nation" of China'. In the Government, President Lee Teng-hui proposed the idea of 'New Taiwanese' to form a new national identity for Taiwan in which everyone who lived in Taiwan is Taiwanese (Liberty Times, 2005). This concept then had compelling impact on every aspect of Taiwanese society, especially cultural policy making. It was a critical stage in the reshaping of Taiwanese identity because society then became divided into those who relished the idea of the New Taiwanese and those who did not (Clark, 2007: 524-527). This is a key factor for new generations of Taiwanese, whether originally from the mainland, or from Han or indigenous Taiwanese families. Their historical and political views are now quite different from those of their parents and grandparents. This process also demonstrates the way in which politicians can conceive the formation of a nation, and then through regular 'flagging' that idea may become reality in people's minds. As a result, 'national identity is seldom forgotten' (Billig, 1995: 174).

Alan M. Wachman (1994: 91) discusses the causes of the rise of a specifically Taiwanese identity among which, separation from the rest of China with the development of a divergent collective memory is the most significant. The mainlanders

who came to Taiwan after 1949 with their memories of the old China, bringing with them a national identity of the original Republic of China, are fewer as time goes by. There is now a progressive disappearance of the distinction between the views of the new generations of mainlanders and those of pre-existing Taiwanese. As a result, within the 98% of the population who are Han Taiwanese, the distinction between the views of each of the so-called ‘ethnic groups’ is disappearing as they come together in their shared Taiwanese identity (Lee, 2006).

An article on the ‘Taiwanese National Security Survey’ by Department of Political Science of Duke University, North Carolina, USA appeared in *The Reporter* on 29 January 2016. It reveals that 70% of the generation born after 1980 (the so-called ‘naturally independent Taiwanese’, *Tien ran du shih dai*, 天然獨世代), regard themselves as Taiwanese, whereas almost none of them regard themselves as Chinese. On the other hand, the generation born between 1966 and 1980, who tend to consider themselves as both Chinese and Taiwanese, has declined from 63% in 2002 to 40% in 2015. Another national survey about identity conducted by *Common Wealth Magazine* (3 January, 2017) shows that for the population as a whole, 61.6% regard themselves as Taiwanese, 28.2% as both Taiwanese and Chinese, and 6.9% as Chinese. However, when people between 30 and 39 years old are asked the same question, 67% regard themselves as Taiwanese, while for people between 20 and 29 years old the figure goes up to 76%. Both these latter generations are more likely than the average to call themselves Taiwanese, showing that the gap in opinion between the older and younger generations in Taiwan is widening, especially for those who were born after martial law was lifted in 1987.

Without the experience of living under the KMT’s authoritarian regime, the new generations of Taiwanese people, who have their own lifestyle, and who share experiences and values as well as views connected with Taiwan, have formed a strong



Taiwanese identity. What is more, as the PRC once again embraces traditional Chinese culture, it now considers that it is the one and only spokesman for Chinese culture (The Reporter, 2016). This means that Taiwan is no longer the sole guardian of traditional Chinese culture as it was during the Chinese Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976 when the PRC repudiated its historical background. This also has the effect of weakening Taiwan's Chinese identity.

Since democracy, the view of Taiwanese culture has shifted dramatically because politics has always played a vital role in the conception and development of cultural identity. More and more local Taiwanese history has been revealed, which has been an eye-opener for new generations. There is increasing debate as to whether Taiwanese culture is a regional form of Chinese culture, or whether it is a distinct culture of its own. In Chuang Wan-shou's (2003) view, Taiwanese culture is an independent culture because of three factors: geographical features, historical accumulation, and resident formation. He explains that Taiwan has both Han Chinese and indigenous people, and that over the past 400 years, five different ruling regimes in Taiwan have made Taiwan special and unique. Taiwanese culture therefore has been formed from the cultural integration of these successive waves of legacies and has developed into its own culture.

After becoming The Republic of China, while the Government promoted Chinese cultural traditions, the Taiwanese were also encouraged to be open to Western culture, particularly in arts and literature and especially from the US which became an important ally of Taiwan (Copper, 2013: 16-17). This was another reason why Hsieh Chang-ting, a former Premier of Taiwan, contends that cultural diversity (*Wen hua duo yang shing*, 文化多樣性) is one of the main characteristics of Taiwan and one which it is important to maintain (Lee, 2006).

To conclude, Taiwanese culture today is a hybrid of various cultures with Chinese culture as its basis. The numerous indigenous cultures, the colonial legacies, Western cultural influences and assorted new immigrant cultures have amalgamated to form Taiwan's multiculture as a new imagination of Taiwanese identity which is creating a collective awareness of the island's own lifestyle.

### **2.3.3 Contemporary Identity Issues**

Although Taiwan is today a liberal and democratic country that respects its diversity, with the current uncertainty over its status as a state, the people of Taiwan have an identity dilemma. The main reason for this is that their imagined national identity is different according to whether they feel they belong to the ROC or to Taiwan. In Copper's (2013: 30) pinion 'Taiwan's past is often cited as evidence for both those who advocate that it is part of China, or should be, and those who do not'. This suggests that the main problem for Taiwanese identity today is whether or not Taiwan is a component of a greater 'China'. This dilemma has influenced many aspects of life in Taiwan, including cultural policy making. Some contemporary issues cited below illustrate the complexity of Taiwanese identity nowadays.

#### **External and internal recognition disorder**

The identity of a community is reflected in its members' natural affinity for the place or land in which they live, and this distinguishes them from all others who do not live there. Following Anderson's argument, people in Taiwan who respond in this way would form, or imagine themselves to belong to, a Taiwanese nation. However, there is a problem when the official name of the country is not Taiwan, but rather 'the Republic of China'. Externally, for foreigners and others who are not immediately involved, despite any knowledge they may have about the political background, this

distinction may seem hair-splitting. However, internally, for Taiwanese it is a matter of great consequence in every aspect such as travel, international affairs, and most importantly, the national identity.

Lowell Dittmer (2004: 477) believes that ‘the beginnings of Taiwan’s difficulty with the concept of identity came with Sino-American détente at the beginning of the 1970s, which coincided with (and inadvertently facilitated) Taiwan’s eviction from the United Nations’. Once the title ‘China’ was taken away from Taiwan and given to the PRC, Taiwan’s identity was in a crisis that still haunts it and there are constant threats, especially from the PRC, if Taiwan proposes any change to its political status (ibid.). In this diplomatic predicament, the Taiwanese Government has felt unable to make overt changes to anything related to its political independence over recent decades. This underlying political instability is the main reason for ‘recognition disorder’ for Taiwanese people because they do not have an internationally recognised state with which to identify. The official name of the country, the calendar, the constitution, passports and other official documents all proclaim ‘the Republic of China’.

But this form of words has become increasingly irrelevant for the modern population who merely find it an inconvenience. For example, before the word ‘Taiwan’ was added to ‘the Republic of China’ on the cover of Taiwanese passports in 2003, immigration officers in other countries regularly assumed that visitors from Taiwan held Chinese nationality and therefore needed visas. This complication has improved since 2003, but sometimes immigration officers are still confused to see both ‘Republic of China’ and ‘Taiwan’ on the cover page of a passport (The Reporter, 2016). This example of the many daily inconveniences for Taiwanese people demonstrates that, even though ‘banal nationalism’ (Billig, 1995) flags nationhood in everyday life, they would have a much stronger feeling of association with the land they live in if it had its own name, rather than one imposed on it.

As far as cultural identity is concerned, people who are ethnically Chinese probably feel their Chinese cultural identity no matter which country they live in.

Wachman explains:

For instance, one person may believe that ‘Chinese’ encompasses cultural, national, and political factors. Another person may distinguish between being culturally Chinese and being politically associated with a country other than China. There is no list of criteria by which one may determine who is *really* Chinese when people from Vancouver to Penang, Tsingtao to Lukang all claim the same label. (Wachman, 1994: 56)

This is, in Smith’s (1991) terminology, a ‘vertical *ethnie*’ in which Chinese (*Zhonghua*) culture is a historical culture shared between different communities resident in various nations. Although the PRC government would regard all these people as overseas Chinese (culturally), it is clear that the PRC would not consider Canadian Chinese or Malaysian Chinese to have the PRC nationality. However, the situation is very different in Taiwan as the PRC has never stopped claiming that Taiwan is part of China, and this causes many Han Taiwanese to deny their Chinese cultural identity. Indeed, under the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Taiwanese Government, there is constant controversy about cultural ‘desinicisation’ (*Chu Zhongguo hua*, 去中國化)—whether or not to proclaim a fundamentally Chinese identity for Taiwan. Dittmer (2004: 477) therefore believes that ‘Taiwan’s quest for national identity is not just a search, but an open-minded question, to which there is more than one conceivable answer’. In other words, although there is consensus on the celebration of cultural diversity in Taiwan, the political situation for the Taiwanese people remains in a state of uncertainty. Dittmer sees three possible solutions which are also common in Taiwanese society nowadays:

1. The formation of a national identity as an independent and sovereign Taiwan, eventually (security conditions permitting) a Republic of Taiwan with its own constitution and flag.
2. The retention of the identity of the Republic of China, tracing it back to the 1911 Xinhai Revolution.
3. The *status quo*, which is no real ‘solution’, but merely a protraction of the current identity crisis, consisting of *de facto* autonomy with neither reunification nor independence. (ibid.)

There is still an ongoing political tension on national identity in Taiwan, and support for each of the solutions above ebbs and flows in a way that stimulates debate in Taiwanese society, especially during elections, but comes to no agreement.

### **Continued pressure from China and the idea of ‘One China’**

Both the ROC and PRC have imagined for themselves their own vision of ‘China’ which, in the so-called ‘1992 Consensus’, was described as ‘One China with respective interpretations’. In this way ‘both sides could espouse a one China policy, though each could interpret this as they wished’ (Copper, 2013: 207).

What the PRC has in mind is the ‘One country, Two systems’ (The State Council, PRC, 2000) formula that exists in Hong Kong and Macau. In Taiwan, the KMT government saw ‘One China’ as the ROC and regarded it a lucky charm to keep Taiwan at peace within the *status quo*, but it never entered into an official written agreement with China. Thus, when the DPP took over the Taiwanese Government, they did not accept the ‘1992 Consensus’, but merely recognised that there was a meeting in 1992 dealing with these issues (National Policy Foundation, 2011). The result was angry reprisals by the PRC government which stopped most official exchanges with Taiwan, for example, tourism in 2019.

According to a report in Hong Kong’s *Apple Daily* (2014), based on the 2010 population census by the Chinese government, there are about two million Taiwanese working or living in China. This figure represents nearly 10% of Taiwan’s population,

and these people could play an influential part in any election if China tries to control their votes. Also, the threat that China might use military force to ‘recover’ Taiwan, is constantly present, although this kind of military threat normally fosters a sense of Taiwanese solidarity, and hence stronger Taiwanese identity. Nevertheless, China’s economic, diplomatic and cultural strength is growing and some Taiwanese, especially those living in China who have a personal attachment to the Chinese economy, would be influenced. China is not slow to realise the economic power it has over Taiwan. These days, this kind of influence from China even spreads to cultural aspects. This sort of pressure from Taiwan’s giant neighbour is growing ever stronger.

### ***Zhonghua* cultural identity**

Pierre Moulinier in his book *Les politiques publiques de la culture en France* (2010) claims that many factors influence national identity and culture is one. Although Taiwanese culture is a hybrid of various different cultures—Chinese, indigenous, Western, Japanese and immigrant—it is unarguably based on Chinese (*Zhonghua*, 中華) culture. The influences from elsewhere have developed a distinct Taiwanese culture that takes its place within the family of East Asian *Zhonghua*-influenced cultures such as those of Japan, Korea or Vietnam.

The huge majority of the Taiwanese population has a Chinese cultural background, writes with traditional Chinese ‘national characters’ (*Guo tz*, 國字), and speaks Mandarin as the ‘national language’ (*Guo yu*, 國語), which even the indigenous people and immigrants need to use to communicate on the island. However, ‘Chinese culture’ covers different concepts. In the Chinese language, *Zhonghua wen hua* (中華文化) refers to Chinese civilisation and ethnic culture and does not necessary refer to the culture of ‘the nation of China’ (*Zhongguo*, 中國) (Chang & Holt, 2015: 162). The difference between *Zhongguo* and *Zhonghua* is at the root of the Taiwanese

cultural problem. Nowadays, the former refers only to mainland China (PRC), while the latter describes all ethnic Chinese people around the world wherever they happen to live, even though their nationalities might be Malaysian, Thai, Canadian or Taiwanese.

Researching into Taiwanese identity, the PRC scholar Yang Zhong (2016) reveals the tensions between Taiwanese *Zhonghua* cultural background and nationality. He observes:

Most Taiwanese people reject being called ‘Chinese’ (*Zhongguo ren*, 中國人) when asked about their national identity. However, they do not deny their ethnic and cultural Chinese identity. What they object to is being called Chinese nationals, especially when this China is internationally recognised as the People’s Republic of China.....Specifically, changed state boundaries, desire for separation from mainland China, and recognition of Taiwan as a sovereign state, as well as the distinctive cultural reconstruction inside Taiwan, contribute to the national identity shift in Taiwan. (Yang, 2016: 351)

It is significant that this research comes from a scholar based in the PRC. Yang, perhaps bravely, points to the uniqueness and distinctiveness of Taiwan compared with China, though he acknowledges that Taiwan’s cultural identity can still be regarded as largely Chinese (*Zhonghua*). As mentioned above, this is an example of the influence of a ‘vertical *ethnie*’ (Smith, 1991), and why it is possible to conceive a cultural identity for Taiwan, founded on *Zhonghua wen hua* (Chinese culture) but distinct from *Zhongguo wen hua* (culture of China).

### **Globalisation as a Taiwanese identity strategy**

As an effectively sovereign state with its own national defence force and all the other conditions that characterise a country, Taiwan has devised its own ways to connect with the world, and the world implicitly accepts it. In Copper’s (2013: 216) opinion

this situation ‘reflected Taipei’s flexible diplomacy and prevents Taiwan from being excluded from important international organisations’. Taiwan and the world have found a pragmatic way to deal with each other and culture has played a vital role in this. Through increasing international exchanges in cultural events, especially in the performing arts, Taiwan has established channels to connect with most other nations.

For Taiwanese, embracing the world and finding a place in the international stage is the strategy to obtain international recognition and to resolve its own issues of self-identification. Hence, ‘cosmopolitanism and globalisation are the important factors in the making of a Taiwanese identity’ which is able to demonstrate a rich variety of ‘international colour’ through its historical legacies to achieve Taiwan’s ‘cultural heterogeneity and hybridity’ (Wang, 2000: 102-103). Kuo Wei-fan, the former Minister of Council of Cultural Affairs (CCA) (1988-1993), Minister of Ministry of Education (MOE) (1993-1996) and Chairman of the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (NCKSCC) (2010-2013), analyses the influence of globalisation in Taiwan’s cultural environment by taking Taiwan’s joining international organisations such as the World Trade Organisation as examples. He argues that, under the international structure, tourism, higher education, cultural commodities, international chains, and other similar factors have an unconscious impact on Taiwan’s culture, and this has then had an effect on the formation of Taiwan’s cultural policy (Kuo, 2011: 2-10). As a result, even though Taiwan is still not able to participate in international political institutions, it can more easily join the world through alternatives, and cultural affairs is one of the significant approaches. International cultural exchange has been a key agenda for Taiwan’s cultural policy including policy for performing arts and has been an influence on Taiwanese identity.

Michael Wintle (1996) has observed that feelings about national identity and culture can be shared by people who share very little else by way of background or



politics and sees it as an issue of the integration of a number of different identities into a single national identity. 'Shared memories, shared hopes, and shared continuity (rather than uniformity) are essential; a common subject perception of the group's history' (p. 23). This indeed reflects the direction of Taiwan's national policy which nowadays focuses on integration, especially in its cultural policy, as a way of celebrating the country's cultural diversity (Lung, 2008). Although Taiwan might not be the best example of a multicultural society with its overwhelmingly Han ethnic composition, it nevertheless shows that even small minorities can receive attention and play important roles in Taiwan's cultural spectrum.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

This chapter introduces the work of a series of significant authors concerning the meaning of 'culture', 'nation' and 'identity' in order to establish the most relevant definitions for use in the research that forms the main body of the thesis.

The term 'culture' potentially covers a spectrum of activities that include the arts, literature and heritage, but various authors select different sectors of the spectrum when writing about culture. They may use a narrow definition equating culture with the high arts, or they may go to the other extreme and consider that every aspect of human life is an aspect of culture in an anthropological sense. Raymond Williams, for example, sees culture as 'a whole way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual'. As far as this thesis is concerned, since it considers the activities of the National Performing Arts Centre, a useful definition takes high arts as a primary focus. However, the chapter has understood culture more broadly in its endeavour to explore the formation and transformation of Taiwan's national and cultural identity.

Regarding the theories of 'nation' and 'nationalism', Anthony D. Smith's '*ethnie*' concept, Eric Hobsbawm's 'invented traditions' and Benedict Anderson's 'imagined communities' are of great importance when analysing the particular case of Taiwan. Also, according to Michael Billig's 'banal nationalism', the flagging or reminding of nationhood in people's daily life includes the effects of the performing arts. This therefore makes a link between Taiwanese identity and the performing arts and, over time, changes in flagging reflects the evolution of national identity. Although Taiwan is still not recognised diplomatically, the process of formation of the 'nation of Taiwan' and of 'Taiwanese identity' is no different from the situation of any other nation. Smith (2001: 128) contends that 'national identity was always being reinterpreted and refashioned by each generation' and the evidence is that this is exactly what is happening in Taiwan. As Stuart Hall points out, identity is not just about 'being', but it is a constantly developing phenomenon about 'becoming' (1996: 4). This should equally apply for the people of Taiwan.

This chapter also elaborates how Taiwanese identity is defined and has evolved by demonstrating the factors that influence its formation. Taiwanese identity nowadays embraces additional elements of cultural diversity not only indigenous, Western or new immigrant, but also gender, sexuality, religion, disability, age, and economic background (Hong, 2008). Most of these components of Taiwanese culture have always existed; the significant change is that they are no longer hidden and ignored, but are openly acknowledged and respected. The important role of Chinese (*Zhonghua*) culture is recognised, but prominence is also given to indigenous, new migrant and a whole range of other Taiwanese cultures, and the whole package is seen as being 'Taiwanese culture'. It is also remarkable that political democracy plays a crucial role in the shifting Taiwanese identity in terms of liberty and the change in focus to Taiwan-centred issues. As a result, people have come to appreciate that there is a unique

Taiwanese identity that integrates its varied historical legacies. The concept of Taiwanese multiculturalism (*Taiwan duo yuan wen hua*, 台灣多元文化) can represent a relatively apolitical way of encouraging a sense of nationhood that can allow for the inclusion of not only all the different Han Taiwanese groups, but also the other minority groups.

Taiwanese identity is a constantly changing and fluid idea which is continually in a state of 'becoming'. It has undergone a series of changes from mono-Chinese culture to the multi-Taiwanese culture which are paralleled by the Government's approach to the formulation of cultural policy. The content of cultural policy originates in the cultural differences that exist in Taiwan, which then go on to influence cultural identity. Within the threatening diplomatic situation, culture and the arts can be crucial domains which Taiwan is able to participate in along with the international community. This makes it a relevant and significant topic to examine in relation to its role in forming Taiwanese identity and leads to more detailed discussion in later chapters.

## **Chapter 3: Cultural Policy and Its Development**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter explores cultural policy development in Taiwan by examining the agencies of policy-making and the evolution of Taiwanese identity through successive governmental changes. It starts with a literature review on the way cultural policy is defined and looks at how the term is used by the Taiwanese Government. A distinction is drawn between ‘democratising culture’ and ‘cultural democracy’, after which the chapter looks at the various ways in which governments formulate and use cultural policy objectives. The distinction between ‘explicit’ and ‘implicit’ cultural policies helps to exemplify the different forms of cultural policy and to show how the non-cultural institutions, organisations and agencies that are responsible for formulating cultural policies set about their work.

Cultural policy is a component of public policy through which it influences a country’s cultural activity, in particular the performing arts. When thinking about culture in a broad way, a public policy, whether or not it carries the title ‘culture’, affects a country’s cultural life both explicitly and implicitly. As a result, cultural policy-making promotes the national brand through an unintentional, though constant, process of flagging (Billig, 1995) which therefore builds up a national identity.

There have been three successive periods in the way the Taiwanese Government has established its cultural agencies: 1949 to 1981 (period 1); 1981 to 2012 (period 2); and 2012 to 2017 (period 3). These periods reflect political changes and the consequent development of the way in which the Government has conceived its cultural policy. Three aspects of each period have been examined: the agencies in charge of implicit/explicit cultural policy; the way cultural policy is formulated and

implemented; and the transformation of Taiwanese identity. Specifically, the chapter seeks to answer the following questions: ‘Who sets Taiwan’s cultural policy?’ ‘How has this changed under different government regimes?’ and ‘Does Taiwanese identity relate to the creation of government cultural policy?’.

The answers to these questions demonstrate how Taiwanese identity has shifted during a time when those responsible for formulating cultural policy have themselves changed as Taiwan moved from one-party authoritarianism to democracy. They also highlight how the changes of identity among the Taiwan population have gone hand-in-hand with government cultural policy, sometimes implicitly and sometimes explicitly. Cultural affairs in today’s democratic Taiwan have become prominent in the political agenda and are seen as politically significant when the country’s international status is uncertain. They have become important tools in the creation of the nation’s international branding and in marking Taiwan out as separate and different from other nations.

### **3.2 Understanding Cultural Policy**

Under the influence of globalisation with what Pertti Alasuutari (2009: 99-102) has called ‘the world culture of the moderns’, most countries share similar norms and values. They all profess to endorse such values as equality and freedom of speech, put in place institutional systems to encourage or enforce them and thereby gain international recognition. Those concepts have shaped the face of cultural policy throughout the modern world, and for Alasuutari, ‘arts patronage’ linked with the cultural policy is a crucial element of world culture. This explains why many government regimes across the world have established cultural departments to take responsibility for national cultural policy. Culture is accepted as an important

component of national life. Today, all types of government regularly assume that cultural affairs are good business and develop relevant public policies. Clearly, Taiwan's cultural policy today is part of 'world culture', but it is also important to recognise that the policy is a product of political and socio-cultural shifts in Taiwanese society, as Section 3.3 will demonstrate. This section starts with definitions of cultural policy and then explores the domain of that policy in the modern world.

### **3.2.1 Cultural Policy Definition and Domain**

#### **The definitions of cultural policy**

The phrase 'cultural policy' implies the plans and strategies which governments develop in order to support 'culture' in the broad sense. The English word 'policy' is normally translated into Chinese as *Cheng tse* (政策) which relates more specifically to government strategy and planning. In English a similar term in meaning might be 'public policy' or 'national policy'. Hence, Tchen Yu-chiou, Minister of the CCA from 2000 to 2004, defines 'policy' as the plans and tactics set by governments, organisations or institutions for fulfilling their specific goals through a process of research, discussion, induction and legislation (Tchen, 2013: 23). Meanwhile, Han Pao-teh, Taiwan's National Policy Advisor to the President from 2000 to 2004, defines policy as 'a statement with positive goals and practical strategies' (Han, 2001:1). He argues that ideas and ideology alone cannot form policy, which should include a hierarchy and framework. Thus, a nation's policy should start with constitutional laws and regulations (*ibid.*). In a similar vein, Kevin V. Mulcahy sums up his view of public policy by suggesting two general notions:

First, that governmental actions (or inactions) constitute value choices, that these choices are policies, and that the policies are politically determined; second, that the decisions of public officials are implemented by the

production of goods and services that produce discernible societal outcomes.  
(Mulcahy, 2006: 320)

Public policy therefore echoes government's vision, intentions, goals, and more importantly the way to achieve them. Mulcahy (2017: vii) goes on to explain how the value choices mentioned above are formed into 'a nation's public policies which reflect the historical experiences and value system that have characterised its social development'. As a result, the infrastructure of public policy consists of national constitutional laws, legislation and regulations concerning people's daily life under the administrative and executive agencies of government. The development of public policy influences every aspect of a nation's evolution and, as Mulcahy (2017) points out. Taiwan is no exception to this.

Public policy with respect to culture in Raymond Williams's broad sense, forms what may be termed 'cultural policy', although J. Mark Schuster (2003: 1) refines the definition of cultural policy as 'the sum of a government's activities with respect to the arts (including the for-profit cultural industries), the humanities, and the heritage'. It is clear that traditionally defined culture sits at the core part of cultural policy.

Regarding the factors influencing cultural policy, David Bell and Kate Oakley (2015: 6) believe that because it is also one of the forms of public policy, 'it is subject to the same political changes, financial challenges and global tensions as any other form of public policy'. Mulcahy (2017: viii) then asserts that, depending on their political culture, governments 'vary in the ways that their cultural policies are conceptualised and implemented'. The mechanism by which cultural policy is normally implemented is set up by the Government with various laws and regulations, and the strategy of distribution of governmental grants (Tchen, 2013: 23-24). Mulcahy gives a useful summary:

With regard to the variety of institutions and programmes that have been created to implement a cultural policy, their aesthetic values reflect popular perceptions about what is acceptable. In this sense, cultural policies represent a microcosm of broader social and political world views. (Mulcahy, 2017: viii)

Changes in society influence political culture and consequently, the development of cultural policy. Through the evolution of cultural policy, ‘flaggings’ or reminders of identity (Billig, 1995) that are encountered in everyday life include the language used in cultural policy documents and reflect the transformation of a nation’s identity, a main focus of this thesis.

### **The domain of cultural policy**

Concerning the domain of cultural policy, Oliver Bennett (2009: 68-69) believes that ‘within the discourse of cultural policy, culture was thus defined as those activities deemed worthy of support by public authorities’. And nowadays this tends to be the arts since ‘arts patronage’ (Alasuutari, 2009) forms the main part of government cultural policy. Jim McGuigan (2001: 124) regards cultural policy to be ‘quite closely associated with arts policy, the objects of which are the aesthetic, the affective, and values’, cultural policy covers in addition ‘civic and national identity, and cultural citizenship’. In this way, looking at how cultural policy changes from year to year illuminates the way that society is changing and is a reflection of the identity of the country.

Eleonora Redaelli (2012: 145) also thinks that the core of cultural policy is arts and heritage, and that formulation of cultural policy is characteristically through a ministry of culture or similar governmental bureau. State intervention can mean positive support and protection for culture, but a policy of non-intervention by the state does not necessarily mean that the state ignores or even takes no responsibility for culture or the arts.



The sphere of contemporary cultural policy thus inevitably retains its traditional core of arts and heritage, but also takes in new areas of activity as it progresses and develops. The inclusion of commercial cultural and creative industries is a good example of this and Clive Gray gives a good modern summary of the domain of cultural policy:

Community cultural development, cultural diversity, cultural sustainability, cultural heritage, the cultural and creative industries, lifestyle culture and eco-culture, planning for intercultural city, cultural planning *per se*, support for national languages, currently controversial issues in the wider society. (Gray, 2010: 218)

However, many commentators (e.g. Gray, 2010; Hesmondhalgh, 2005; McGuigan, 1996) have pointed out the problem of defining culture too inclusively. Bell and Oakley (2015:17) explain that ‘the issue raised by using a very broad definition of cultures as way of life is that it is difficult to know where “culture” ends and “everything else” begins’. For practical purposes, a limit is needed to what is included in culture. Bell and Oakley propose that John Storey’s view is accepted: ‘the culture of cultural policy is, as Storey (2006: 2) puts it, the texts and practises whose principal function is to signify, to produce or to be the occasion for the production of meaning’ (Bell & Oakley, 2015: 17). This includes a wide range of symbolic and creative activities and products, which demonstrates the contemporary trend of a widening the domain of cultural policy from the arts and cultural heritage to additionally include creative industries.

### **Taiwanese definition**

Up to 2017, the national Taiwanese Government published two culture white papers (two acts of national policy legislation, *Wen hua bai pi shu*, 文化白皮書), one in 1998

with a follow-up in 2004<sup>9</sup>. The Government defines the sphere of cultural policy in both papers. The 1998 paper covers daily life, community life, literature, arts, antiques, heritage, folk arts, publication, broadcasting, television, film, and the internet. The 2004 paper includes all these categories but adds another: cultural and creative industries, referenced from a 1997 publication of the UK's 'creative industries' (Tchen, 2013: 192). Thus from 2004, all creative activities giving rise to intellectual property have been included within the scope of cultural policy.

A means of exploring how Taiwan defines its 'cultural and creative industry' is by reference to the *Law for the Development of the Cultural and Creative Industries* which was enacted in 2010. The domain of this law is very broad and covers: the visual arts, music and performance art, cultural assets application and exhibition and performance facility, handicrafts, film, radio and television broadcasting, publication, advertising, product design, visual communication design, designer fashion, architectural design, digital content, creative living, popular music and culture (MOC, 2016). In parallel with the broad scope of this law, the responsibilities of the Ministry of Culture (MOC) of Taiwan not only include the classical arts, literature, museums and heritage, but also film, radio, popular music, and the cultural and creative industries.

Although 'culture' has now been given an entirely new face and contemporary identity in Taiwan, this broad understanding has not put an end to definitional debate. It is not easy to see how this will resolve itself in today's digital era with instantly renewing cyber media when popular and commercial cultures are all involved in the spectrum of cultural policy. One example occurred when a new arm's-length government body, the Taiwan Creative Content Agency, was established to 'spur on

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<sup>9</sup> A third culture white paper was published by the Ministry of Culture in 2018.

the development of the cultural content industry and of cultural industries' (Laws & Regulations Database of the ROC, 2019). Considerable concern was expressed in Taiwan's arts fraternity about whether the substantial budget allocated to this new institution would soak up a large proportion of the budget of the Ministry of Culture (United Daily News, 2019).

While the ministry now embraces the inclusive definition of culture, there is still a clear distinction made between high culture/arts and commercial/popular culture/arts in its day-to-day policy making. Questions about the former are likely to centre on the need for financial support and sponsorship and, indeed, on the extent and level of financial support that the state should give to its sponsored institutions. While for the commercial sector the issue is how to create an effective environment that allows commercial businesses to prosper.

This thesis focuses on the arts in the traditional sense, which is the core of Taiwanese cultural policy, because the main concern here is government-sponsored performing arts institutions—the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (NCKSCC) and the National Performing Arts Centre (NPAC)—and how those institutions relate to government cultural policy. In formulating its policy for the NCKSCC and NPAC, the Government needs to be aware of the current state of Taiwanese identity to decide in what direction it would like things to change and then to formulate arts policies to promote change in that direction.

Similarly, publicly funded performing arts institutions need to take account of the nature of their audience in their programming at the same time as they operate within the framework of cultural policy. Against this backdrop, this thesis looks into the relationship between Taiwan's cultural policy and the programming of a government-sponsored performing arts organisation.

### 3.2.2 Democratising Culture and Cultural Democracy

Different types of government, from their differing political standpoints, conceive and formulate cultural policy in different ways (Mulcahy, 2017). Taiwan has experienced considerable political change from authoritarian to democratic government over the past three decades and that has affected every aspect of Taiwanese society. How has the progress of democracy influenced cultural policy during this time?

Geir Vestheim points out that political systems and cultural policy are mutually interconnected:

Cultural policy emerges when agents of the political system intervene with production, distribution and consumption of cultural products, services and experiences. Cultural policy then expresses a relationship between a political system and the cultural field. That relationship may be ideological, normative, economical or organisational of character. (Vestheim, 2012: 497)

In Vestheim's (2012: 496) view 'culture and cultural policy in pre-democratic times were used to 'glorify and legitimise the privileges of the power holders' so that, as far as they are concerned, 'culture might be a useful instrument to secure their privileges and to control and oppress populations'. Harry Hillman-Chartrand and Claire McCaughey (1989) have created a typology of arts patronage in different political states recognising national support (or intervention) for the arts in democratic states as 'facilitator, patron and architect' or, by contrast, in authoritarian states as 'engineer'. The way in which cultural policy is made and implemented by varying types of government is discussed further in Chapter 4 Section 4.3.1.2 'institutional autonomy'.

With similar trajectories from colonial regime, through authoritarian government, to democracy, Taiwan and South Korea have a comparable political history in modern times. Hye-Kyung Lee (2018) in her book *Cultural Policy in South Korea: Making A New Patron State* shows that the existence of a cultural policy is not limited to

democratic states and that there is no automatic relationship between democracy and cultural policy. Nevertheless, in the case of South Korea, the development of cultural policy since its democracy in the late 1980s demonstrates that ‘they can be closely interconnected and mutually affecting’: democracy can ‘shape cultural policy’s purpose and means’, and in return, a democratic cultural policy is then able to facilitate the ‘socio-political advancement of a society’ (Lee, 2018: 63).

In an analogous way, since Taiwan started its move towards democracy in the late 1980s, its cultural life has also experienced a progressive democratisation. The influence of political democracy on the development of cultural policy became a significant factor because it stimulated a change in Taiwanese identity in parallel with that of cultural policy. However, both Lee (2018) and Mulcahy (2017) emphasise that ‘democratising culture’ and ‘cultural democracy’ are different. For them, ‘democratising culture’ refers to the provision of good public access to those cultural activities that are normally considered high culture which was once the preserve of the elite in society. Meanwhile, cultural democracy ‘gives people power to decide their own cultural pursuits and to explore a wider meaning of culture, inclusive of popular, commercial, folk and amateur cultures’ (Lee, 2018: 63). Mulcahy (2017: xviii-xix) adds that it provides ‘for a more populist approach in the definition and provision of cultural opportunities... The government’s responsibility is to provide equal opportunities for citizens to be culturally active in their own terms’.

Both ‘democratising culture’ and ‘cultural democracy’ are crucial in the development of cultural policy; they are not sequential processes, but work together and complement one another. In the case of Taiwan, the action of ‘democratising culture’ has been to make cultural activities accessible regardless of people’s background, even during the pre-democratic period. However, before democracy, culture was defined by the KMT regime as Chinese (*Zhonghua*) culture, and

monocultural Chinese identity was a matter of government policy at a time when censorship was used to enforce that objective.

‘Cultural democracy’ only came about after Taiwan progressed into political democracy and people became free to express themselves and to create new work as they wished. This in turn influenced the direction of development of Taiwan’s cultural policy and resulted in a respect for diverse multiculturalism. As new Taiwanese identity has been formed it has moved away from pure Chineseness and the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (NCKSCC) epitomises this development. When it was launched, the Centre was the foremost national performing arts centre in the country, offering its programmes to the elite. But in more recent years its aim has been to make high-quality programmes that are accessible to the general public. It now celebrates Taiwan’s cultural diversity, and at the same time promotes cultural democracy by introducing new kinds of performance such as circus, street dance and Taiwanese folk music which the audience are keen to see (NCKSCC, 2007).

### **3.2.3 Cultural Policy Objectives**

In the opinion of Tchen Yu-chiou, Taiwan’s Minister at the CCA from 2000 to 2004, a cultural policy is the ‘inescapable consequence’ of the existence of a state (2013: 24). She claims that cultural affairs are ideally a property of the entire population, and only through the awareness, participation, and support of the entire population, can the need for a cultural policy be established and the foundation of a cultural policy be built. Oliver Bennett (2009: 70) adds that ‘cultural policy must produce demonstrable social benefits’ for its legitimacy. In his view, the reason that a government engages in the arts depends on how it can ‘justify its actions on the basis of the contributions the arts are said to make to the society’ (ibid.). The relationship between a government and its

decisions about what cultural and arts activities it is prepared to support is a continuing topic for debate across the globe.

In relation to the way cultural policy can produce social benefits, Bennett (2009: 70) claims that there are three recurring themes. The first is *moral improvement*, in which culture and the arts have a 'civilising influence' that 'has been the dominant justification for cultural policy'. This objective was at play during the KMT regime when the Government imposed control through its cultural policy as it tried to make people 'good citizens'. The second theme is *economic benefits* which reflects the way that the creative industries have become prominent worldwide in recent years. Taiwan is a good example of this as the Government has developed policies with a belief that it can boost the economy by encouraging the creative industries. What is more, the economic benefits that creativity can bring act as a powerful justification for public (financial) support for creativity. The third theme is *national identity and prestige*. Although Bennett describes how this has evolved from older traditions in Europe, for example, to display French exceptionalism in France, Victorian confidence in the UK, and the reconstruction of national determination in post-war Germany, this feature would apply in many developing countries which harness culture and the arts to (re)develop cultural or national identity and confidence.

Regarding this third theme, Kevin Robins (2007) explains the connection between a country and its cultural policy as he points out:

For it is the nation and nation-state that have served as the primary frame of reference for cultural policy in the modern period. Indeed, we may say that the national state created an entirely new and unprecedented institution of culture and cultural policy. In the nation-state era, cultural policy has essentially been about shaping and managing national cultural orders. The central objective has been to create a sense of belonging and allegiance to the national community. (Robins, 2007: 150)

David Throsby (2010) also emphasises the relationship between national identity and cultural policy:

The recognition and celebration of national, regional or local identity is an important objective of cultural policy at each of these levels of government. The objective can be articulated in terms of the cultural value accruing to individuals through understanding of who they are. (Throsby, 2010: 43)

In this sense, a nation's identity and its cultural policy mutually influence one another and are both significant factors in determining new phases in national history. Taiwan gave an example of this when the KMT regime made Chinese monocultural identity its foremost cultural policy objective, and then that objective was overturned by the subsequent democratic governments in favour of the promotion of Taiwanese multicultural identity. The continuing evolution of Taiwanese identity is a significant factor in the development of a cultural policy for Taiwan and this will be discussed in Section 3.3.

David Hesmondhalgh and his colleagues (2015) feel that the goals of cultural policy nowadays are commonly 'national branding or promotion, protection of heritage and historical artefacts, support for cultural production, and distribution and cultural consumption' (Hesmondhalgh, Oakley, Lee & Nisbett, 2015: 7-9). Taiwan is no exception to this agenda and the direction of Taiwan's cultural policy development has now changed from the construction of a national identity to the branding of the nation to the outside world since, as a matter of policy, Taiwan is keen to embrace global cultural values and to become a recognised member of international society. For Taiwan, the objective of *national branding and promotion* is vital because of its diplomatically difficult situation. The conflict between national and cultural identity discussed in Chapter 2 prompts Taiwan to operate in a determined way to achieve its aim. Nevertheless, there still is an ongoing debate about which 'nation' Taiwan is



trying to brand and promote. Is it the Republic of China or Taiwan?

### **3.2.4 Explicit and Implicit Cultural Policy**

Lung Yin-tai, who was Taiwan's first Minister of the Ministry of Culture (MOC) between 2012 and 2014, advocates the special status of cultural policy because cultural development provides government with a means of coordinating all kinds of policies at different levels of government (Lung, 2008). In her view, the key aspect of policy implementation is the integration of cultural policy across the complete span of government policies: public policies ought to influence and react with one another. Echoing Lung's idea, David Throsby (2010: 28) explains that nowadays cultural policy is not a single system existing in isolation but rather one that brings together the work of different departments of the government's administrative structure in a way that expands the concept of cultural policy. He lists the areas of government responsibility that are likely to have some involvement with cultural policy. These include: arts/cultural ministry, finance/treasury, industry development, labour, trade, education, urban/regional development, environment, information technology and the media, legal affairs, and social welfare (Throsby, 2010: 28-29). In this view of modern society, cultural policy may appear in diverse forms and could be made by disparate administrative institutions. It is not only policies and policy-makers that bear the name 'cultural' that have an influence on cultural affairs, because many, if not all, public policies and ministries can have influenced people's cultural life.

The question then is, as David Bell and Kate Oakley (2015: 55) ask, 'when is a public policy classifiable as a cultural policy?'. Jeremy Ahearne (2009: 142) starts by explaining that for him the concept of 'culture' is broad, and is 'taken to signify embodied systems of values and attitudes'. In this way, his use of 'the term (culture)

is thus not synonymous with that of arts', although he admits that 'arts denote the domain of consciously crafted symbolic works (in cultural policy studies)'. To demonstrate his ideas, Ahearne (2009: 141) explains that 'explicit' or 'nominal' cultural policies refer to those policies clearly labelled as 'cultural', whereas 'implicit' or 'effective' cultural policies refer to those without the label 'cultural', but which are intended to 'prescribe or shape cultural attitudes and habits over given territories'. He points out that:

Explicit cultural policies will often identify culture quite simply with certain consecrated forms of artistic expression, thereby, deflecting attention from other forms of policy action upon culture. Within the domain of implicit cultural policies, one might also distinguish between the unintended cultural side effects of various kind of policy and those deliberate courses of action intended to shape cultures but which are not expressly thematised as such. (Ahearne, 2009: 144)

In Ahearne's opinion, an explicit cultural policy is easily recognised whereas an implicit cultural policy is more 'in the air' and cannot easily be perceived (2009: 142). When a policy can be only seen to relate to culture in a vague and indirect way, it can be regarded as 'implicit' and this is why Ahearne suggests that Joseph Nye's idea of 'soft power' might also be included in the domain of implicit cultural policy because soft power has an effect across the spectrum of contemporary cultural policy. Vestheim (2012: 496) points out that implicit cultural policies may have a more influential effect on the political system than explicit policies because 'they are less visible and consequently represent a "hidden" ideology that legitimises power structure outside and inside the political system'.

Under Ahearne's concept, the potential sphere of 'implicit' cultural policy is immense. Thinking in this inclusive way increases the difficulty of identifying a policy that can be labelled 'cultural' and, as Bell and Oakley (2015: 55) have pointed out,

‘this is quite a conundrum, where are we to “draw the line” in terms of policies that we would include as part of our analysis and those that are outside our concern?’. While it is easy to appreciate that any policy can have an effect on culture when culture is defined in an all-inclusive way, this is not helpful when attempting to analyse the effect of a government’s policies.

The balance between explicit and implicit cultural policies might be more heavily weighted in favour of the implicit in countries such as Western democracies ‘where the state is almost invisible as the task of governance is dispersed and decentralised among many non-state professional organisations, private individuals and their practices’ (Lee, 2018: 10). However, not every country fits this pattern and in the case of a country with an illiberal government, or where there is a restrictive approach to liberty, liberal governance is not a necessary feature of the regime. Instead, censorship, control and even police monitoring of cultural affairs may be the government’s method of operation and when this happens the balance is likely to favour explicit policies. According to Lee (2018), many Asian countries which experienced colonialism and autocracy give examples of this situation. Having experienced Japanese colonial rule which was then followed by an authoritarian government, Taiwan is one. The KMT’s explicit policy to promote Chinese culture was deliberately implemented in such a way that implicit effects were at a minimum. Nowadays, however, Taiwan is a closer fit with the typical models of Ahearne’s theory because explicit cultural policies are not implemented in so forceful a manner but at the same time Taiwanese culture is implicitly promoted by many areas of government policy.

Regarding the types of public policy which are more likely to function implicitly as cultural policy, David Throsby (2009: 181) finds that ‘economic policy broadly defined is implicitly cultural because it reflects and reinforces accepted cultural norms (or what the government takes those norms to be)’. He also suggests that cultural

policy can act as an implicit economic policy, taking the example of creative industry policies ‘whose objectives are explicitly cultural but whose real though covert intention is economic’ (Throsby, 2009: 182). Similarly, many other public policies such as immigration policy, redistributive taxation and labour market policy, media regulation and international trade policy can all be implicitly cultural. In Throsby’s view, educational policy, indigenous policy, diplomatic policy and social warfare policy can be included within the list of policies that are implicitly cultural because, as Ahearne (2009: 147) says, they are ‘policies whose immediate explicit benefits are the condition of their long-term implicit cultural goals’.

This is also the case for Taiwan. During the authoritarian period, the KMT government’s non-cultural agencies made ‘explicit’ cultural policy. Those ministries may not have been entitled ‘cultural’ organisations, and may not have had an overt responsibility for cultural affairs, but they nevertheless had a significant effect on cultural institutions and their activities. On the other hand, in the contemporary democratic period, the current Minister of Culture, Cheng Li-chun, who has been in post since 2016, is of the opinion that ‘every ministry is a cultural ministry’ borrowing the idea from France’s ‘44 cultural ministries’ indicated by Jack Lang (Cheng, 2016). She believes that culture is the core value of government administration and that every ministry should therefore have its own cultural vision. It is then vital that the cultural visions of all the ministries are properly coordinated, and in order to do that it is valuable to use Ahearne’s approach because ‘to ignore such strategically interesting nexuses of culture and policy simply because they do not bear the appropriate labels or crop up in familiar administrative sectors seems myopic’ (Ahearne, 2009: 151). Indeed, ‘effective cultural-shaping policies have often existed in implicit or unthematized mode’ and ‘the actual impact of policy upon culture may not always be where we are accustomed to look for it’ (ibid.). Thus, as Taiwan’s cultural policy is

investigated in this thesis from its origins in 1949, when the KMT regime took power, up to the democratic era of 2017, it will be important to look at both explicit cultural policies and organisations as well as other organisations and policies that have an effect on the cultural life of the country, but are not directly charged with responsibility for it.

### **3.3 Cultural Policy Development in Taiwan**

#### **Analysis method**

This section analyses cultural policy development in Taiwan, using the thematic structure discussed in Section 3.2 for three periods from 1949 to 2017. Firstly, it explores the agencies in charge of cultural policy and the content of the policies, using the concept of explicit/implicit cultural policy. This is especially useful during the early period when there was no government agency or cultural institution with specific responsibility for cultural affairs, so cultural policy was promoted through organisations such as the Government Information Office (GIO) and the KMT's Committee for Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture (CRPCC). Secondly, it examines the way cultural policy is formulated and implemented in order to reveal how democratising culture/cultural democracy applies. Finally, after bringing together the factors influencing cultural policy, it will highlight any evidence for shifts in Taiwanese identity.

#### **Historic context**

The formation of various cultural agencies by Taiwan's central government can be split into three chronological periods. In Period One which ran from 1949 until 1981 there was no specific government cultural agency and cultural affairs were mainly under the control of the KMT. Period Two ran from 1981 when the Council of Cultural

Affairs (CCA) was established through the period when Taiwan became democratic, until 2012. Period Three started in 2012 when the Ministry of Culture (MOC) was upgraded from the CCA, and runs until 2017.

Before examining these three periods, it is useful to summarise Taiwan's complicated political situation which was explained in more detail in Chapter 2. Even today, Taiwan still retains *The Constitution of the Republic of China* (December, 1947) which was promulgated in 1947 when the Government still dominated mainland China. Chapter XIII: Fundamental National Policies of this constitution includes, in Section 5, at least four articles that deal with culture and show its importance to the country. Those articles specify: the function of culture, the minimum government budget for culture, support for artists, and the protection of heritage and culture<sup>10</sup> (Laws & Regulations Database of the ROC, 2016). Culture is given equal prominence with other Fundamental National Policies including National Defence, Foreign Affairs, National Economy, Social Security/Welfare, and Education. When the KMT government transferred to Taiwan and instituted martial law there, they imposed a constitution on the country that was quite divorced from the reality of day-to-day government, but

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<sup>10</sup> Some important articles of *The Constitution of the Republic of China* concerning cultural policy are as follows: Article 158: Education and culture shall be aimed at the development among the citizens of a national spirit, the spirit of self-government, national morality, good physique, scientific knowledge, and the ability to earn a living. Article 164: Expenditures of educational programs, scientific studies and cultural services shall not be, in respect of the Central Government, less than 15% of the total national budget; in respect of each province, less than 25% of the total provincial budgets; and in respect of each municipality or *hsien* (county, 縣), less than 35% of the total municipal or *hsien* (county) budget. Educational and cultural foundations established in accordance with law shall, together with their property, be protected. Article 165: The State shall safeguard the livelihood of those who work in the fields of education, sciences and arts, and shall, in accordance with the development of national economy, increase their remuneration from time to time. Article 166: The State shall encourage scientific discoveries and inventions, and shall protect ancient sites and articles of historical, cultural or artistic value (Laws & Regulations Database of the ROC, 2016).

even today it is still politically too difficult to make changes to the 1947 Constitution which is therefore still in force. The biggest controversy is that, according to the constitution, the official name of Taiwan still remains 'The Republic of China' (ROC) and the articles of the constitution are supposedly still in force across the whole of China, including the mainland, as well as Republic of Mongolia. This unrealistically outdated constitution is, however, the starting point for an investigation of Taiwanese identity.

Between 1945 and 1949, Taiwan was a province of China, and at that time the Ministry of Education (MOE) had sole responsibility for cultural affairs. But, as Taiwan was still in a chaotic and unstable state as it recovered from World War Two, and civil war seemed imminent, cultural policy had low priority. Nevertheless, as early as 1948, the year before the arrival of the KMT government in Taiwan, the Historical Document Committee of Taiwan Province was established and this was the beginning of an official concern for cultural affairs (Kuo, 2011: 232). Every *hsien* (county, 縣) in Taiwan then launched its own historical document committee and Kuo Wei-fan, a former Minister of the CCA (1988-1993), identifies these committees as the most important institutions for protecting local culture (mainly literature and documents) before county cultural centres were introduced (ibid.). Thus in the early period, the main goal of cultural affairs was to preserve the heritage.

### **3.3.1 Period One: The KMT Control (1949-1981)**

This is the longest of the three periods during which Taiwan was ruled by the Kuomintang party. Before there was a government ministry specifically charged with responsibility for cultural policy, KMT committees played an influential role in every aspect of Taiwan's cultural life. There were few explicitly stated cultural policies

beyond the KMT's overriding intention of respecting Chinese traditional culture. Nevertheless, this intention was explicit in every aspect of the Government's work and it was rigorously applied by censorship. Chinese ideology and identity were imposed on the Taiwanese people.

### **'Agencies' in charge of cultural affairs**

In the early years of the KMT government in Taiwan, there was no institution with direct responsibility for cultural affairs at the central governmental level until the Cultural Bureau was established in 1967 under the Ministry of Education (MOE). The Bureau was given responsibility for cultural and arts development, publication, radio, television, and film. It only existed for about six years during which cultural policy was, in the words of Tchen Yu-chiou (CCA Minister from 2000 to 2004), formulated to conform to, and to be a sub-set of, overall national (KMT) policy. Its objectives were to promote ethics and morality within a Chinese context, to ensure that traditional Chinese culture was effectively preserved and promoted in Taiwan (Tchen, 2013: 115). Tchen also notes that while the performing arts were officially supported during this period, performing arts companies could only play in school halls, community centres, and temple plazas because there were no proper performing arts venues. In 1972 the Cultural Bureau was wound up and its responsibilities for cultural and arts development were handed over to another branch of the Ministry of Education, the Department of Social Education. The Government Information Office (GIO), of the Executive Yuan took on publication, radio, television, and film (Tchen, 2013: 30-31).

In parallel with this, during the period of one-party rule, two non-governmental committees shared responsibility for Taiwan's cultural policy and for covering most of the country's cultural activities. There was the KMT Cultural and Promotion Committee and also the Committee for Reviving and Promoting Chinese (*Zhonghua*)



Culture (CRPCC, 中華文化復興運動推行委員會). The Taiwanese cultural study scholar, Wang Li-jung (2014: 39) stresses that ‘during this period, the KMT government maintained tight control over cultural policy, and policies were implemented directly by the KMT party and administrative institutions’. As a result, the KMT was the main cultural policy decision maker and ‘the government’s cultural departments or agencies were essentially executive organisations’ (Kuo, 2011: 229).

The significant Committee for Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture (CRPCC) was formed in 1967 by Chiang Kai-shek<sup>11</sup> (GACC, 2015). Tchen Yu-chiou comments that the CRPCC was not a government organisation, but rather a cultural agency under the control of the KMT (Tchen, 2013: 31). Its aims were to encourage the revival of Chinese culture, to construct a culture based on the *Three Principles for People* (*San min chu yi*, 三民主義)<sup>12</sup>, and to preserve orthodox Chinese culture (ibid.). Each week, the CRPCC held meetings chaired by President Chiang Kai-shek which all cabinet members of the government were obliged to attend. Between 1967 and 1970, the main tasks of the CRPCC were:

- Academic research and publication.
- Building up a guiding principle for the daily lives of the population.
- Counselling and promoting new arts.
- Innovating the educational system.
- Reviving the culture of overseas Chinese.
- Setting up cultural opposition to the enemy Communist party.

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<sup>11</sup> When the ‘Cultural Revolution’ movement started in China in 1966 it attempted to promote Chinese Communism by destroying traditional elements of Chinese society. Soon afterwards in Taiwan, the establishment of the ‘Committee for Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture’ (CRPCC) was proposed by Chiang Kai-shek and launched on 28 July 1967. It advocated protecting and preserving traditional Chinese culture and encouraged all kinds of institutions and organisations in Taiwan to follow this discourse. President Chiang Kai-shek appointed himself the first leader of the CRPCC (GACC, 2015).

<sup>12</sup> The *Three Principles of the People* is a political philosophy developed by Dr Sun Yat-sen, the founding father of the Republic of China. The three principles are: people’s government/nationalism, people’s power over government/democracy, and people’s welfare (Sun, 1924/1965).

- Planning a special exhibition of revived Chinese culture for the celebrations of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Republic of China in 1972.

(Tchen, 2013: 31)

This is a good example of what Oliver Bennet (2009) calls ‘moral improvement’ as a function of cultural policy, through the addition of objectives related to ideology and propaganda. It was seen as a vital approach to initiating the ‘civilising influence’ of culture and the underlying rationale for the country’s cultural policy was set by it. The belief was that there is a direct connection between culture and civilization that can thereby promote social transformation.

The CRPCC, as an idiosyncratic non-governmental cultural organisation, produced explicit cultural policies that have ‘culture’ in their title, but also, through its behind-the-scenes influence on government organisations, promoted implicit cultural policies that were intended to shape people’s way of life, thoughts and identity. The CRPCC still exists today, although it has had several name changes over the years and has gradually declined in importance with the change of the political climate.

During this period of highly censored activity, responsibility for the arts lay with the Ministry of Education (MOE), but the main work of that Ministry naturally focused on education. Culture was a small part of the responsibilities of a large ministry and this gave it low priority amongst the Ministry’s more immediate concerns. The result was slow progress in the development of cultural activities in Taiwan over the many years that they were under the Ministry of Education’s guardianship.

For this reason, it is interesting to consider the application of Ahearne’s ideas about the relationship between explicit and implicit cultural policy in Taiwan at that time. As far as explicit policy was concerned during authoritarian rule, culture was the business of the MOE and its Cultural Bureau, but in reality, their role was only superficial because the MOE had other priorities. At a time of fierce cultural

censorship, the strings of power were held by other government departments such as the Government Information Office, the Ministry of Interior and even the police organisation, all of whom were kept under strict control by the KMT party committee. The result was an implicit cultural policy across the country masterminded by such non-governmental institutions as the KMT's Committees who were intent on moulding people's way of life and ideology, leaving the MOE as merely the explicit public face of government culture.

### **Authoritarian rule and censorship**

During this period, censorship, prohibition and policing were the Government's main tools used for the control of cultural activities. Wang Li-jung (2014: 39) explains that the KMT 'censored the media and all publications, and established cultural and arts associations under the control of the KMT party'. Cultural affairs became one of the controlling tools used by the Government. Han Pao-teh, Taiwan's National Policy Advisor to the President from 2000 to 2004, explains that cultural policy during this period focused on resistance to the KMT's perceived opponent, the Communist Party in China (Han, 2001). The KMT believed that one of the reasons that they lost the civil war was because of the strong cultural propaganda of the Communist Party that dominated in China. The KMT therefore deliberately set up a 'cultural policy' in Taiwan in an attempt to control ideology and thoughts by what they called an 'anti-Communist and revival base' (*fan gong fu hsing ji di*, 反共復興基地) in Taiwan (ibid.).

This is a reflection of the cultural objective of 'national branding' where Taiwan is presented to international society as the real, traditional and free China. In his review of national cultural policy, Han explains that arts and literature during this period were used as tools to 'cultivate' people, and traditions tended to be preserved (Han, 2001).

Freedom of thought was suppressed and the cultural environment was controlled by censorship. Although none of this was specified as official cultural policy and merely took the form of practical political action, cultural groups resented political pressure on their freedom. According to Taiwanese popular cultural historian Li Kun-cheng, the Taiwan Garrison Command, the Ministry of Interior and the Government Information Office were successively in charge of censorship (Li, 2007). Music and publications were prohibited for a range of reasons, such as being pro-communist, anti-government, against public order and good morals. Sometimes no reason was given for prohibition, but merely a requirement for patriotism to 'Greater China' emphasising that the ROC is the real, liberal and democratic China, which will eventually take back the mainland to liberate benighted fellow Chinese people there. Censorship was common and ubiquitous, especially for clearly visible artistic activities.

The implementation of cultural policy not only encouraged what the Government wanted people to follow, but also banned what the Government wished people not to have contact with. This kind of domination and imposition shaped the character of Taiwanese society, the nature of its culture, and the identity of the country in Period One.

### **Cultural construction and democratising culture**

With the rapid economic development during the late phase of this period, Taiwan was on a route to become a developed country in terms of its economy. The Government then wanted to do the same for cultural affairs and initiated a policy of 'cultural construction' (*Wen hua chien she*, 文化建設). This is a broad phrase that could refer to buildings which need to be constructed, but in a more abstract way it also can refer to enhancing and building righteous cultural values or identity as well as establishing a professional mechanism for formulating cultural policy. With this background, and

despite the low priority of culture within the Ministry of Education (MOE), there was progress and in 1977 Chiang Ching-kuo, the then Premier of the Executive Yuan launched *The Twelve Construction Plans* two of which related to cultural construction: *Plan of the MOE for Building County/Local Cultural Centres* (1978), and *Plan for Enhancing Cultural and Educational Recreation Activities* (1978). These Plans were adopted by the Executive Yuan in 1978 (Kuo, 2011: 233).

Based on the first Plan, counties started to build their own cultural centres consisting of performing arts venues, galleries, libraries, museums and community centres the first of which appeared in 1979. The Government's aim was to enable people to enjoy the arts and culture in every county, and not just in the capital, Taipei. This was a 'democratising culture' policy that wanted to make arts and culture accessible even though the country was still under authoritarian governance. In the absence of a cultural affairs institution at central government level, these county cultural centres were initially supervised by the Ministry of Education. Following the second Plan, the Government not only decided to establish a cultural agency (the then Council for Cultural Affairs) at the central-government level, but also initiated many important policies, such as the cultural fund, the annual cultural season, the national cultural award, the foundation of a new arts college to support national opera and contemporary theatre, and an evaluation of the laws on copyright and antique preservation' (Kuo, 2011: 232-233). These cultural policies are explicit and indicated that after years of political stability and economic success, Taiwan now had sufficient awareness and ability to take cultural affairs away from the MOE and boost their importance by creating their own Ministry.

## Chinese identity

In David Bell and Kate Oakley's (2015: 112) view 'there is an obvious connection between culture and nation formation, therefore, culture is conscripted into helping define the nation'. Taking Taiwan as an example, this corresponds with Benedict Anderson's (2006) idea of 'the nation as an imagined community' since 'the steering of the imaginative work of making a nation cohere and self-identify is often down to culture' (Bell & Oakley, 2015: 113). During the KMT regime, despite the existence of different Taiwanese ethnic groups with various cultural backgrounds, the Chinese culture of the mainland Chinese immigrants became a monocultural identity which was forced on all Taiwanese people. As Anthony D. Smith (1991: 52) has described, the formation of a new national identity is 'shaped by the historic culture of its dominant *ethnie*', and at this time, mainland Chinese became Taiwan's dominant *ethnie* during this period. The Government was at pains to emphasise that they carried the torch for the real China with its traditional Chinese (*Zhonghua*, 中華) culture and the KMT, as a Chinese nationalist party, tried to shape the cultural policy of Taiwan based on exclusively Chinese (*Zhonghua*) traditions when it took over sovereignty in Taiwan.

In this climate, the Government tried to envelop people under one 'great' and 'historical' Chinese cultural atmosphere using a strategy of education and media, while ignoring the varied cultural backgrounds of Taiwanese people who had occupied the country before the arrival of the KMT. Using various propaganda methods, the Government tried to construct a single unified Chinese identity for Taiwan on which all cultural policies, whether explicit or implicit were focused. To give just one example, on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1967, the inaugural meeting of the CRPCC's Executive Committee adopted *The First Draft of the Main Points for Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture* and *The Plan to Carry Out Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture*. These

two explicit cultural policies were influential in the country (National Academy for Educational Research, 2000) and demonstrate the strongly Chinese identity imposed on the population. During this period, a National language (Mandarin, *Guo yu*, 國語), National opera (Peking Opera *Guo ju*, 國劇), National music (traditional Chinese music, *Guo yue*, 國樂), National painting (traditional Chinese painting, *Guo hua*, 國畫), and so on, were instituted as ‘invented traditions’ (Hobsbawm, 1983) to form a ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 2006). Cultural policy under this authoritarian regime enforced strong Chinese identity to create Chineseness in Taiwan despite the fact that pre-1949 the Taiwanese population had been strongly influenced by their Japanese colonial masters.

To summarise, during this period, although there were government agencies that dealt with cultural affairs, the KMT’s organisations such as the CRPCC were most prominent in making cultural policy. As the President of Taiwan was also the KMT party leader, Wang Li-jung (2014) explains how the system worked. The President himself:

was the foremost and highest administrator of cultural affairs. He constructed and delivered cultural policy without soliciting any collaboration within the central government. The resulting cultural policies were explicit and dominated by political considerations, party interests and Chinese identity. (Wang, 2014: 39)

As a result, government institutions such as the MOE and the GIO focused more on policy delivery than on formulation as the KMT party was the decision maker. Building up mono-Chinese identity was the main interest of the KMT. Whether cultural policies were explicit or implicit, censorship and policing played a main role during the early phase of this period and prohibition was a prominent feature. Nevertheless, during the late phase of the period, the Government started to implement an approach of ‘democratising culture’, recognising that excellent cultural services and

facilities should not be offered exclusively to any specific social class or particular metropolitan area. They should be more accessible and available. The Government also realised the importance of establishing a central cultural institution to deal with cultural affairs and make a proper cultural policy. These features were forerunners of Taiwan's political and cultural democracy in Period Two.

### **3.3.2 Period Two: The Establishment of the CCA (1981-2012)**

This period saw an important transition in Taiwan's democratic development, with a substantial change in the political climate, along with a corresponding shift in Taiwanese identity. In the cultural sphere, it was also remarkable in that it saw the central government's establishment of a cultural agency as well as a non-government foundation for cultural subsidy. Public policies bearing the title 'cultural' therefore became more explicit through the institutionalised cultural agencies. As part of the move to democracy, censorship was removed and an era of liberalised artistic creation began. Cultural democracy began while the approach of democratising culture was carried on and these developments had a fundamental effect on Taiwanese identity. Two culture white papers (1998 & 2004, *Wen hua bai pi shu*, 文化白皮書) were published at this time, and with their significant status along with their process of formation, they will be the main foci of examination of the themes of democratising culture/cultural democracy and Taiwanese identity shift.

#### **The Council of Cultural Affairs (CCA)**

The disadvantage of including culture within the remit of the Ministry of Education was addressed in 1981 by the creation of the Council of Cultural Affairs (CCA). According to an interview with the first Minister of the CCA, Chen Chi-lu (2005), which was published in the book *Cultural Construction: Cultural Management*



*Pioneer's Talks*, the CCA was the first central government agency under the Executive Yuan, and was set up to take charge of cultural affairs in Taiwan. Interestingly, the official Chinese name of the CCA actually means 'Cultural Construction Committee' (*Wen hua chien she wei yuan hui*, 文化建設委員會) and its original structure was a committee consisting of officials from other ministries who came together to discuss national cultural affairs (Chen, 2005: 38). It was therefore an institution with a position above all the ministries which was supposed to coordinate cultural issues across the country. Amongst other issues, it was to deal with the implicit policies of different ministries and to take the role of final judge. Whatever the founding intentions had been, according to Kuo Wei-fan, Minister from 1988 to 1993, this ideal model was never realised and ministries always sent low level representatives to the CCA's meetings rather than ministers themselves (Kuo, interview of 28 June 2018). As a result, the CCA was seen as a quasi-ministry government organisation dealing with cultural affairs. And at the same time some other aspects of cultural affairs remained under the administration of the Ministry of Education (MOE). Museums, performing arts venues such as the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (NCKSCC) and the National Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall all remained with the MOE while the Government Information Office retained responsibility for publication, film, television, radio, and popular music and so on. According to Kuo Wei-fan, 'the CCA was a very small government department with a meagre budget and inadequate staff' (Kuo, interview of 28 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author).

Nevertheless, the indication was that the Government had started the process of setting up a body responsible for formulating cultural policy at the central governmental level. Kuo Wei-fan, who was the second Minister of the CCA, defines the tasks of the CCA as making, coordinating, deliberating and promoting cultural policies, even though the powers of execution were not all vested in the CCA, but

remained with other Ministries such as Interior, Transportation and Education (Kuo, 2011: 235). For example, until 2014 the NCKSCC, the sole performing arts centre in Taiwan during this period, was under the MOE. This anomaly in the way cultural organisations were administered continued until 2012 when the Ministry of Culture (MOC) was formed by upgrading the CCA.

The CCA took charge of setting cultural policies, preserving the cultural heritage, promoting the arts, and improving social life (ibid.). It was tasked with planning the nation's cultural infrastructure, with promoting the development of national and local cultures, and drawing up and implementing related policies. This would be done through supporting artists, cultural exchange and collaboration. In addition, the CCA was also responsible for cultural research and any other activities that the Executive Yuan felt was part of its remit<sup>13</sup>. The first Minister of the CCA was anthropologist Chen Chi-lu and during his term of office from 1981 to 1987, the CCA mainly followed the 1978 *Plan for Enhancing Cultural and Educational Recreation Activities* which gave added emphasis to the preservation of cultural heritage and contributed to the legislation in the *Cultural Heritage Preservation Act* of 1982. The *Plan* was later revised as *Plan for Enhancing Cultural Construction* under the CCA in 1987 (Kuo, 2011: 234-235). The main focus of cultural policies during that period could be seen in the *Plan for Enhancing Cultural Construction*, which identified three main aims:

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13 According to the first Minister, Chen Chi-lu, the specific breakdown of the CCA's mission is set out as follows: draw up basic guidelines and priority measures for cultural construction; set up a plan and course of action for cultural construction; arrange meetings about cultural construction and follow up with execution, communication and evaluation; develop and encourage talented individuals for cultural construction; plan promotion and evaluation for cultural exchange and collaboration, plan promotion and evaluation for the preservation of cultural heritage and enhancement of cultural dissemination, plan promotion for important cultural events and cultural opposition to communism; data collection, classification and research for cultural construction and any other matters related to cultural construction or assigned by the Executive Yuan (Chen, 2005: 38).

promoting cultural institutions and preserving cultural heritage; enhancing the standard of arts appreciation and creativity; and improving the social climate, through different programmes. For the performing arts, the *Plan* aimed to establish the features of each county cultural centre, to support both national and local performing arts companies, and to cultivate professionals for cultural institutions (ibid.). This was the beginning of governmental subsidy for performing arts companies.

Once the CCA was established to take charge of formulating cultural policy, its minister became the key person in making that policy reflected the country's agendas. In other words, the CCA Minister became the President's representative in dealing with cultural affairs and the Minister's vision should spring from the policies of the current government. This phenomenon became more conspicuous after 1996 when Taiwanese people started to elect their President directly.

In this way, the appointment of the Ministers became a crucial act as he or she was tasked with representing the views (*Cheng chien*, 政見) of the newly elected President through the CCA's cultural policy. The development of cultural policies and their subsequent implementation is a process that takes time, but cultural affairs have always been comparatively low priority for the Government and Ministers have come and gone rapidly. Between 1981 and 2012, the CCA had a total of 14 Ministers; the longest term of office was 6 years and 8 months (Chen Chi-lu, the first Minister) and the shortest 3 months (2 Ministers). Generally speaking, most Ministers only served for 1 to 2 years. This kind of frequent change does not allow any individual Minister the time needed to give proper attention to cultural policy formulation or implementation, especially when each new Minister is keen to make his or her mark by making changes. Lin Fang-yi, a former MOC Officer, described when interviewed how during her time working in the CCA/MOC, there were three government changes following presidential elections. She commented that the difficulty for her as a civil

servant was that every time a new Minister came on board, the main aim of the cultural policy changed. Normally, it takes a few years for a cultural policy to process from proposal, formation, legislation, implementation to evaluation. However, ‘every four years, if the Government changes after an election, the cultural officers know that they will have to start again as the new government will not be keen to accept the policy of the former government. This is the most appalling thing’ (Lin, interview of 8 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author). In this situation, how can long-term cultural policies be carried out?

### **From the Committee for Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture (CRPCC) to the General Association of Chinese Culture (GACC)**

Although the CCA was launched in 1981, the once-influential Committee for Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture (CRPCC) continued to exist, albeit from 1990 with a new title: the General Association for Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture. After the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) won the presidential election in 2004, the name changed again in 2006 and it became the National Association of Culture, with the removal of the word ‘Chinese’. The 2008 election was won by the KMT and the name was changed for a third time in 2010 to the General Association of Chinese Culture (GACC), and ‘Chinese’ returned (GACC, 2015). In 2016, the DPP again won the election, but this time the word ‘Chinese’ was retained and the English name of the GACC has remained the same until today. Its Chinese name ‘*Wen zong*’ (文總) is not literally reflected by the English name and is best translated as ‘the General Association of Culture’. This is one indication of the way the evolution of Taiwanese identity is influenced by changes in the ruling political party.

Although the CRPCC was not a government institution, it played a role in cultural policy during Taiwan’s martial law period. However, once Taiwan set out on a

progressively democratic path, the influence of the CRPCC (and now GACC) has declined. Its position became anomalous when the CCA and then the MOC were established. However, it seems that the Government is still reluctant, or possibly too timid, to abolish it as it has become a symbolic cultural organisation. It has an emblematic political role because by tradition its members are often selected from high level government personalities including the President. Indeed, the President of Taiwan normally acts as its Honorary President. As a non-governmental organisation, the GACC (2019) claims to be funded by donation and sponsorship. However, since its key individuals are mostly government officials, it is questionable to what extent the principle of arm's-length distance from the Government operates there.

The main objectives of the GACC under the KMT government between 2008 and 2016 were: enhancing Chinese (*Zhonghua*) culture, supporting local culture, inspiring national innovation, strengthening cultural exchange, promoting international collaboration, and encouraging cultural and creative industry (GACC, 2015). However, when the Government changed to the DPP, its main objectives then became: to continue enhancing and extending Taiwan's cultural power; to continue promoting cultural exchange and coordination between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait; and to reinforce Taiwan's cultural exchange with international society. There is no mention of anything about Chinese (*Zhonghua*) culture, but instead, the emphasis is on 'culture as the accumulation process of life. We live in the contemporary era facing the past as well as creating the future' (GACC, 2019). Again, the varying foci of different governments reflect their points of view on Taiwan's identity.

### **National Culture and Arts Foundation (NCAF)**

In 1996, following the model of the USA's National Endowment of Arts, Taiwan's National Culture and Arts Foundation (NCAF) was founded with an initial capital of

NT\$6 billion (£ 150 million) remitted by the CCA with additional donations from private individuals and groups (NCAF, 2016). The NCAF is another arm's-length body rather than a government organisation but despite this there is strong government influence, not least through its funding. The Minister of the CCA in 1996, Kuo Wei-fan, recalls that the establishment of the NCAF was the fruit of the first National Cultural Conference in 1990 with the hope that NT\$4 billion (£ 100 million) of the initial capital of NT\$6 billion (£ 150 million) would come from donations. This never happened. The budget of the NCAF continues to be provided by the CCA which is responsible for allocating grants to arts and culture (Kuo, interview of 28 June 2018).

With the foundation of the NCAF, the concept of cultural autonomy was introduced, and the Government now subsidises the arts and culture, not directly, but through the NCAF with its professional staff so it remains at arm's-length from the NCAF and the activities that it supports. According to the NCAF (2016), its main mission is 'research and development, grants, awards, and resource development', and each year they provide 'grants, funding, and other assistance to individuals and non-profit organisations involved in literature, the visual arts, music, dance, traditional and contemporary theatre, cultural heritage preservation, audio/video arts, and arts environment and development'.

Although the NCAF proclaims its independence from the CCA and the MOC, its Board of Directors are actually nominated by those government bodies and then selected by the Premier of the Executive Yuan (NCAF, 2016). Its funding is almost entirely from the Government. This means that the work of the NCAF is in reality closely related to government cultural policy, and the NCAF is always staffed by people with political awareness, who have a sensitivity for the wishes of government and to the priorities of government policy. The result is that the Government is able to regulate the NCAF's work with a comparatively gentle hand but in the knowledge that

its policies will be adhered to. The Government holds the purse strings. Nevertheless, the establishment of the NCAF remains a significant milestone for Taiwan's cultural policy development in terms of institutional autonomy which then became the mainstream in future cultural governance. Because the mission of the NCAF in practice overlaps with that of the CCA and the MOC in terms of subsidy, the Government is now considering its reconstruction.

### **Cultural democracy: the National Cultural Conference and the Culture White Paper**

As the main cultural agency at the central government level, the CCA is responsible for holding the National Cultural Conference which has the function of building consensus, of fostering conversation and gathering ideas about culture from the public. This concept was initiated after Taiwan's democracy and it is the critical forum for collecting opinions, setting agendas and deciding future cultural policy (Kuo, interview of 6 June 2018). However, over a period of more than 30 years, the CCA has only held three National Cultural Conferences (in 1990, 1997 and 2002) and only two culture white papers were released by the CCA as a result of the conference proceedings (in 1998 and 2004). Wei Chun-yin, one of the Board of Directors of the Taiwan Association of Cultural Policy Studies traces back the initiation of the first National Cultural Conference and, from the conference documents, it is clear that the reason to convoke the meeting was 'awareness of the rapid change in Taiwanese society'. The Government felt that an assembly was needed for brainstorming and to discuss its cultural vision. Wei therefore considers that:

A national cultural conference is a process of explaining cultural policy by engaging people, and then proposing the vision of culture. For Taiwan, each National Cultural Conference and culture white paper demonstrate that the Government is aware of the social, political and economic changes and wants

to address them. (Wei, interview of 7 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

As confirmation of Wei's comments, the background of the second National Conference was to 'reflect Taiwan's political transition from authoritarianism to democracy which acts as an important indicator to a modern civilised country with search for enhancement of the quality of social culture' (Cultural White Paper, 1998: 1).

Jerry Chun-yu Liu, the President of the Taiwan Association of Cultural Policy Studies observes that 'from 2000 to 2004, in pursuing a modern outlook on cultural policy, the CCA called for the public to participate actively in cultural activities to cultivate cultural creativity and competitiveness' (Liu, 2014: 127). The preparation and process for a National Cultural Conference with many preliminary seminars and symposia takes place in different parts of the country in order to create a practical demonstration of Taiwan's cultural democracy which 'entirely echoes the thoughts and aspirations of basic-level cultural workers' (Cultural White Paper, 2004: 1; Wei, interview of 7 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author). Wei Chun-yin also explains that all of the regional meetings and forums are important in terms of cultural issues as they are occasions where government officials, intellectuals, cultural workers, artists and citizens gather together face to face to discuss cultural affairs. Nowadays, they even use social media to collect as many and as broad a range of ideas as they can. Wei claims that this is an example of a 'bottom-up' rather than 'top-down' process (Wei, interview of 7 June 2018), which is the approach of cultural democracy.

In this way, the National Cultural Conference gives everybody the opportunity to be engaged in policy setting and to have a say in the outcome of the meeting. This culturally democratic procedure is therefore a vital stage in forming the direction of cultural policy which is then set out in a culture white paper that presents the



Government's preferences for cultural policy and provides guidance on that policy for ministry staff and the public. By doing so it elaborates the Government's intentions, its approach to cultural affairs, and offers a future vision for Taiwan's culture with suggestions and opinions from the Taiwanese people.

### **Taiwan's identity shift**

After martial law was lifted in 1987, the consensus notion of Taiwan as home to a variety of populations, both indigenous and immigrant was gradually formed. As later generations felt increasingly divorced from the distant Chinese culture, they became conscious that indigenous Taiwanese culture was being ignored. Wang Li-jung (2014: 41) describes how 'Taiwanese consciousness broke up the monoculture of Taiwan and forced the KMT to amend its cultural policy'. As the political climate changed, the emphasis of cultural policy shifted from Chinese to Taiwanese, and the mission of the CCA changed to focus on the synthesis of Taiwanese cultures, and to celebrate Taiwanese multiculturalism (*Taiwan duo yuan wen hua*, 台灣多元文化). In 2000, Taiwan experienced a change of government from the long-ruling KMT to the first administration of the DPP. Every aspect of the country's government changed rapidly at this time, including the policies for culture. Tchen Yu-chiou, the DPP's first Minister of Culture (2000-2004), provided a first-hand view of this: 'the most extraordinary aspect of the CCA's cultural policy direction was from monoculturalism to multiculturalism'. This is a very clear statement of the way that 'Taiwan subjectivity' (*Taiwan jhu ti shing*, 台灣主體性) which refers to the core concept of focus on Taiwan itself became prominent (Tchen, interview of 27 November 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author).

In a similar way, but from a different level of the Government, former MOC Officer, Lin Fang-yi observed how, when the ruling government changes, it brings in

a different public policy which will then stimulate a shift in Taiwan's identity. She feels that politics decides everything:

Who is the Government? What does the Government want to achieve? Where does the Government allocate budget? Answers to these questions stimulate the initiation of projects, plans, discourses, and proposals which would shape Taiwan's identity. (Lin, interview of 8 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

The change of the political climate was recognised in the two culture white papers (1998 & 2004), which strongly influenced subsequent cultural policy development. Both talked about the current cultural environment, cultural policies, cultural administration, support for the arts and literature, preservation of the cultural heritage, regeneration, and cultural exchange, which had all been priorities for the CCA since its foundation. But there is a big difference between the two culture white papers. The 1998 Culture White Paper called for a change in the role of culture from authoritarianism to democracy. It emphasised the strong connection between a country's development and its cultural construction by stating 'culture is the power of a country'. It also started to pay attention to cultural diversity, even though it still focused on how to shape the new 'Chinese' (*Zhonghua*) culture by including other Taiwanese cultures within it (Culture White Paper, 1998). By contrast, the 2004 Culture White Paper undertook a complete reappraisal of cultural policy. It started by reviewing the various cultural structures and policies of different countries and then argued for the creation of a new Ministry in Taiwan in which all the agencies and parts of agencies from across the Government who were responsible for cultural issues would come together under a single Ministry of Culture. It also celebrated Taiwan's cultural diversity and aimed to promote Taiwan as a land with its own culture and traditions. It encouraged the evolution of traditional culture in such a way that Taiwan

could construct its own cultural identity by adding a Taiwanese perspective to an Asian foundation while stressing cultural equality for all citizens. In addition, it proposed the promotion of ‘Cultural and Creative Industries’ (Culture White Paper, 2004).

Tchen Yu-chiou, the Minister of the CCA from 2000 to 2004, who was in charge of the 2004 Culture White Paper explains that when she took the position of Minister of the CCA in 2000, she believed that the core idea of cultural policy must be the establishment of ‘a distinct identity for Taiwan’. In other words, it should contain the history of Taiwan as well as continuing the development of Taiwan. Tchen feels that before 2000, Chinese culture was taken to be the entirety of cultural spectrum in Taiwan. Although she acknowledges that Chinese culture is profound and rich, Tchen thinks that the people in Taiwan should not ignore the culture of the place where they were born and live. Hence, as the CCA Minister, Tchen declared her ideas on the direction of national cultural policy:

I expanded the focus from an overwhelming Chinese culture to a multicultural Taiwan. This multiculturalism includes all kinds of Taiwanese culture, the recognition of our land, our people and innovation for the future. (Tchen, interview of 27 November 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author)

In 2004, the CCA was evidently much more confident about the way cultural matters played a role in people’s daily lives, and it assumed that culture is regarded as ‘good’ nationwide. The formation of ‘Taiwaneseness’ (*Taiwan shing*, 台灣性) began when democracy started to flower in Taiwan and the country has now generated a distinct Taiwanese identity that is different from Chinese identity. Huang Pi-twan, who was Minister of the CCA in 2008 and 2009 comments that this is a ‘natural’ development led by the local consciousness and awareness of new generations of Taiwanese (Huang, interview of 4 December 2015). Between 2004 and 2012, despite the 2008 reversion

of the Government from DPP to KMT, the recognition of Taiwanese-ness became the core concept for cultural policy.

In Period Two the establishment of the CCA was the most significant cultural development. Following the launch of the CCA, more explicit cultural policies were introduced and at the same time implicit cultural policies were also initiated by other ministries or agencies. The CCA's ministers became the key figures in formulating Taiwan's cultural policy, especially when there were frequent changes to the ruling party. However, because the Ministers of the CCA have also changed frequently, the efficiency of cultural policy implementation inevitably became weak. This is perhaps a sign that whatever it might say, the Government still sees cultural policy as a peripheral, superficial and decorative component of Taiwanese life and gives it low priority. Meanwhile the decline of the once-influential GACC signifies not only the shift in cultural policy agency but also in political democracy.

In a more democratic Taiwan, its cultural policy emphasised democratising culture as well as initiating cultural democracy. The inauguration of the NCAF signified the introduction of cultural autonomy to the language of cultural policy. In this period however, the most remarkable feature of cultural policy was the change in emphasis from monocultural Chinese identity to a culturally diverse Taiwanese identity. As David Throsby (2010: 43) suggests that 'the value of cultural identity contributes to cultural policy objectives via a number of avenues', Taiwanese identity has today become a firm and solid feature of the country's everyday life and identity issues are no longer the focus of cultural policy. They have been superseded by the rising concern for cultural democracy and engagement of the public in shaping cultural policy. In the context of these changes, Chinese (*Zhonghua*) culture is now seen as but one component of an inherently multicultural Taiwanese culture.

### **3.3.3 Period Three: The Upgraded MOC (2012-2017)**

Although this is the shortest period, it was significant for the launch of the new Ministry of Culture (MOC) which epitomised the more central status of cultural affairs in the Government. It also demonstrates that the Government intended to maintain and extend the process of democratising culture, but was also trying to achieve cultural democracy by involving the public in suggesting and deciding the formation of cultural policy. As far as Taiwan's identity is concerned, Taiwanese-ness had become the norm within cultural policy.

#### **The Ministry of Culture (MOC)**

Many countries are keen to promote cultural affairs, to protect their heritage, to support the arts, to preserve traditions, and perhaps also to attempt to develop soft power, and expand their cultural economy. Taiwan is no exception. Despite its lack of international diplomatic recognition, Taiwan works hard to fit into the norms of world culture and to embrace international standards by formulating national policies that reflect its native culture. Cultural affairs in the democratic Taiwan of modern times have become fashionable and are perceived as useful, especially in the context of the country's contested international status. Cultural affairs have become an effective component of Taiwan's national branding as it promotes itself internationally.

After long years of discussion, lobbying by the CCA, research into many kinds of ministries of culture worldwide (as presented in the culture white paper of 2004), and pressure from arts and cultural communities, the CCA was finally upgraded in 2012 to form Taiwan's Ministry of Culture (MOC). It became a Cabinet-level government body. Between 2006 and 2008 there was a plan to create a Ministry to cover both Culture and Tourism, but the Government eventually decided instead to establish the Ministry of Culture without responsibility for tourism because some

artists insisted that culture and tourism are different and should not be combined. The Tourism Bureau remained under the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (Liberty Times, 2008). With the creation of the new MOC, agencies and parts of agencies from across the Government with responsibility for cultural issues were brought together. These included the management of four museums and the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (NCKSCC) from the Ministry of Education (MOE); publication, popular music, radio, television and film from the Government Information Office (GIO); and government publication from the Research, Development and Evaluation Commission (MOC, 2014).

The first Minister was the famous writer Lung Ying-tai who had also been the last Minister of the CCA. According to the *Ministry of Culture Organisation Law*,<sup>14</sup> the Ministry of Culture's overall task is 'to plan, coordinate, process and evaluate cultural affairs, to enhance the multicultural values of Taiwan, and to enrich its spiritual life' (MOC, 2015). Its seven departments are dedicated to: general policy planning; the fostering of international cultural exchanges and the development of the arts; the publishing industry; the cultural and creative industries; cultural resources;

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<sup>14</sup> The functions of the Ministry as listed in *Ministry of Culture Organisation Law* include: 1) Research, planning and execution of cultural policy. 2) Setting in motion, overseeing, managing, supporting, rewarding and otherwise promoting cultural construction. 3) Planning, supporting, rewarding and promoting the preservation of cultural assets, establishment of museums and development of communities. 4) Planning, supporting, rewarding and promoting the cultural and creative industries. 5) Planning, supporting, rewarding and promoting the film, broadcast, television and pop music industries. 6) Planning, supporting, rewarding and promoting literature, publishing, government publications and varied forms of culture. 7) Planning, supporting, rewarding and promoting the visual, public, and performing arts as well as the art of living. 8) Planning, supporting, rewarding and promoting international and cross-strait cultural exchanges. 9) Planning, supporting, rewarding and promoting the cultivation of talented people in the cultural sector. 10) Other culture-related work (MOC, 2015).

and film, television and popular music (MOC, 2016). Inevitably, the MOC's cultural policies are very clearly 'explicit'.

Nevertheless, Taiwanese cultural study scholar, Wang Li-jung (2014: 49) points out that there are still other Cabinet-level government bodies that deal with cultural policies such as the Council of Indigenous People, the Hakka Affairs Council, and the Ministry of Labour which all implicitly participate in the development of cultural policy in Taiwan in respect of the ethnic groups. The National Immigration Agency of the Ministry of the Interior also plays a role in cultural issues for new immigrants. This corroborates David Throsby's (2010) observation that nowadays a range of government departments are likely to be involved with cultural policy. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Culture is the main body with explicit responsibility for cultural policy and affairs in Taiwan. The Ministry's six main areas of work include: arts & humanities, creative industries, cultural heritage, communities, cultural exchanges and digital-culture (MOC, 2015).<sup>15</sup> The range spans from traditional high culture and heritage, to community and popular culture. More recently, it has also taken on digital culture, although the MOC does not give details. The content of 'culture' has changed dramatically under the influence of global trends.

The creation of the MOC meant that the country's cultural policy would be systematically and progressively made and implemented. However, up to 2017 this young Ministry has already had three ministers. After her inauguration, Lung Yin-tai (2012) gave interviews with Radio Taiwan International and other media in which she

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<sup>15</sup> The official areas of the Ministry's responsibilities are categorised as follows: 1) Arts & humanities—performing arts, visual arts, public art, and literature. 2) Creative industries—crafts, film, broadcasting & television, pop music, and publishing. 3) Cultural heritages—heritage preservation, national memories, and museums. 4) Communities—living art centres, local community museums, and community empowerment. 5) Cultural exchanges—cross-strait exchanges, and international exchanges. 6) Digital-culture (MOC, 2015).

emphasised that as the first Minister of Culture her main mission was to decide the long-term plan for national cultural development. She was clear that this plan would not solely relate to her four-year term. Lung resigned on 7 December 2014 after only 2 years and 7 months in office. What has happened to cultural policy since she stepped down? In January 2015 the Government appointed Hung Meng-chi as the new Minister and his term lasted only a little over a year. In the circumstances, little is likely to happen to progress cultural policy in the near future and this creates a period of stagnation which also extends to the Ministry of Culture itself. Former MOC officer, Lin Fang-yi spoke at interview about the frustration and inefficiency that this creates and feels that there is an urgent need for the Government to appoint a Minister who will be in post long enough to stabilise the administration and continue with steady development of the existing long-term policy (Lin, interview of 8 June 2018).

Regarding the cultural agencies, nowadays, although the MOC is the main government department in charge of cultural affairs, the GACC still exists and is sometimes very active. There is considerable confusion here because most of the GACC's objectives overlap with what the MOC is charged to do and also because money allocated to the GACC may cause the Ministry of Culture's budget to be reduced. According to Geng Yi-wei, Assistant Professor of the Taipei National University of Arts:

It really depends on how much the GACC would like to achieve with their objectives. The President of Taiwan is still the President of the GACC. That is to say, any national policy advocated by the President can be immediately apply to the GACC. The very recent New Southbound Policy<sup>16</sup> would be an

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<sup>16</sup> According to Taiwan's Executive Yuan (2019), 'the New Southbound Policy is a major element in Taiwan's external economic strategy that calls for developing comprehensive, mutually beneficial relations with countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and South Asia, Australia and New Zealand. This policy by pursuing bilateral exchange and cooperation in several areas'.



example of this. (Geng, interview of 8 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Yet another quasi-government body, the NCAF aims to create a healthier environment in Taiwan for the development of culture and the arts (NCAF, 2015) by giving financial support to individuals and companies in the artistic and cultural fields. This also overlaps with what the Ministry of Culture (MOC) is doing as both of them directly subsidise cultural projects or organisations. Since the MOC was established and given responsibility for new media such as film, television, broadcast, pop music and publication, and also new institutions such as museums, as well as the performing arts centre, it is essential for it to rationalise responsibilities between itself and the other existing national cultural organisations, especially the NCAF. Cheng Li-chun, the current Cultural Minister, has paid attention to this issue and has been trying to sort out the allocation of subsidies between the MOC and the NCAF. Eventually, ‘the plan is for the MOC to focus on cultural policy-making while the NCAF takes charge of subsidy’ (Geng, interview of 8 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author).

### **Cultural democracy**

Cultural policy during the CCA period started to ensure that everyone would have access to cultural and arts activities as a hallmark of cultural democratisation. After the MOC was established, the concept of cultural democracy began to be disseminated more widely. Lung Ying-tai, the first Minister of the MOC (2012 to 2014), proposed cultural policy objectives with four main aims, the first of which was ‘ensuring the cultural rights of citizens’. This was a clear move towards cultural democracy in line with the MOC’s (2015) statement that:

Cultural rights, like political, economic and social rights, are basic human rights to be enjoyed by every citizen. Administering and allocating resources to the cultural sector therefore requires paying attention to ensuring that

grassroots organisations and disadvantaged groups are catered for. It also requires that resources be divided fairly between urban and rural areas. All citizens must be empowered to participate in the cultural life of the nation, as inclusion is what creates bonds within communities, society and the nation at large. While cultural rights are the property of every citizen, society and the nation as a whole become the beneficiaries, as social cohesion is founded on having citizens engaged in their country's cultural life. (MOC, 2015)

Lung's well-publicised four core cultural policy aims gradually introduced the concept of cultural democracy across the country as she aimed to 'to ensure that every village and township in this nation, regardless of its geographic remoteness, has an equal chance to achieve its full cultural potential' and 'to offer the nation's citizens equal accessibility to cultural resources by harnessing the power of cloud computing' (MOC, 2015). In order to achieve the first of these aims, the MOC claims:

The Ministry will strive to attain the goals through its grassroots policies— i.e. to assist communities in remote areas with creating a vibrant cultural and creative environment tailored to their needs. By evenly distributing financial and educational resources among cities, villages and offshore settlements, the Ministry hopes to secure equal cultural rights for every citizen in the nation's 7,835 registered communities. (MOC, 2015)

Cheng Li-chiun, the current Minister's aim to 'cultivate and enhance cultural strength and promote cultural participation' (MOC, 2016) delivers a similar concept to Lung's. The ideas of the two MOC Ministers demonstrates Taiwanese cultural policy's shift from cultural democratisation towards cultural democracy.

### **Broad direction of cultural policy**

The visions and intentions of the MOC tend to be idealistic in setting the international standards of democratic states as the ambition of the ministry. The cultural policy statements of each Minister along with their associated slogans, missions, objectives, and goals look good and are politically correct in trying to attract the attention of the

public but, as with other government references to cultural policy, they are commonly set out in a broad and inclusive direction. As Lin Hwai-min, the founder of Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan observes, when policies are set out in such non-specific terms the positive feature is that they do not tie the hands of creative artists, but the danger is that ‘many of the clauses in the policy end up by being vacuous rather than specifying particular action’ (Lin, interview of 6 May 2016, translated from Mandarin by the author). In the same way, former MOC officer, Lin Fang-yi, comments that the MOC’s proposed cultural policies look great on paper, but ‘when the content is examined in detail, there can be no clues about what those cultural policies want to carry out and how they intend to do it’ (Lin, interview of 8 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author).

Is it inevitable for cultural policies to be so broadly worded that constructing detailed strategies is difficult? According to Jeremy Ahearne (2009: 141), ‘Philippe Urflino (2004: 309-393) contrasts the “duty” of contemporary ministers of culture to be “grandiloquent” with the meagre and banal reality of their administrative functions’. Although ministers’ intentions are probably sincere, this criticism seems to echo the comments above in Taiwan’s MOC. However, this thought may be too cynical and Wu Jing-jyi, NCKSCC Chairman (2006-2007) and consultant to many cultural agencies in Taiwan, is of the opinion that cultural policy at the national level has always to be general in its direction and to be set out in basic terms such as ‘enhancing people’s cultural life’, ‘developing artistic activities’, ‘supporting local talents’ or ‘promoting international cultural exchange’. Wu continues:

Cultural policy is therefore in essence meant to be fundamental and elemental. National cultural policy makers do not in practice have the knowledge to spell out all the details of policy implementation and it is not the responsibility of the Government to give details of cultural policy implementation. That should

be left to professionals. (Wu, interview of 3 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Jung Shu-hwa, Assistant Professor of the Taipei National University of Arts, agrees that cultural policy can only be directional and the more important issues are the financial and practical means to carry these policies out by those cultural organisations which bear the responsibility of implementing cultural policy. Jung believes that creating a better condition and environment for arts troupes is more important (Jung, interview of 11 June 2018).

In a democratic country where the trend is for decentralisation and cultural autonomy, less state intervention allows for greater freedom for culture and the arts. When the main cultural objectives follow global agendas and deal with universal values, slogan-like cultural policies can only provide hints of the main direction for development. The significant thing is how the organisations and agencies that implement cultural policy are allocated a budget for their work and how they respond to cultural policy directions. This is especially important where culture and the arts are heavily supported by state sponsorship. Policies may well be presented in a vague and grandiloquent manner, but the important issue is how these broad-direction cultural policies can be implemented in a sustainable and accountable way to fulfil their objectives. Allocation of a large enough budget for the arts and culture, with a fair method of distribution is the compelling issue.

### **Taiwanese identity**

The formation of the new Ministry of Culture in 2012 initiated a completely new era for Taiwan's cultural development. From the MOC's 2015 cultural policy document, its embrace of the global trend of cultural policy was obvious. Cultural rights, cultural democracy, support for artists, and the interest in creative industries were all central

features. This also corresponds to Taiwan's enthusiasm to be recognised as a player on the world stage by grasping globalisation as a Taiwanese identity strategy (as discussed in Section 2.3.3 in Chapter 2).

Ever since Taiwan's political democratisation, the shift of identity to 'Taiwaneseness' (*Taiwan shing*, 台灣性) has found a firm place in society. Taiwanese identity has put down solid roots and the MOC's agendas have moved on from that issue to become focused on the wider global perspective. Although the first MOC Minister, Lung Yin-tai was appointed by the KMT government, this seems not to have constrained the recognition and celebration of Taiwaneseness by her Ministry. After she stepped down in December 2014, her deputy, Hung Meng-chi succeeded her for the transitional period before the next presidential election in 2016 and Hung's policy direction has basically followed that of Lung. For the first four years, with two Ministers of Culture and under a KMT government, the Ministry of Culture promoted a very Taiwanese, and yet also international, blueprint for culture. In order to gain consensus among the Taiwanese people, the KMT politicians and government have had to accept the overall shift of Taiwanese identity and to sign up to the idea of 'Taiwan subjectivity' (*Taiwan jhu ti shing*, 台灣主體性).

In 2016, the Government changed once more from the KMT to DPP and Cheng Li-chiun, assumed the position of Minister of Culture in May of that year. Although a different party now formed the Government, the essential spirit of democracy and citizenship and the pursuit of Taiwanese identity remained the same. There is no doubt that a specifically Taiwanese identity has become the norm in Taiwan's daily cultural life. Wei Chun-yin, one of the Board of Directors of the Taiwan Association of Cultural Policy Studies who was involved in the 2017 National Cultural Conference recalls that it was natural for the focus of cultural policy to be on Taiwan itself during

the Conference. ‘That is to say, it was all about *this* country, *this* land and the people of Taiwan’ (Wei, interview of 7 June 2017, translated from Mandarin by the author).

Period three has only recently begun since the establishment of the MOC in 2012. This means that it is still an era of hopeful expectation rather than one of achievement. It is clear, however, that no matter what political changes may occur, concepts of cultural policy have reached a steady state and are now unlikely to be substantially changed by politicians. Taiwan has now developed a Taiwan-based identity and the way that culture is defined is expanding. International cultural exchange has become important while community work continues.

The evidence for this can be seen in all three culture white papers (1998, 2004, 2018) which have all devoted many chapters to emphasising the importance of local communities as well as international society. Taiwanese culture is trying hard to obtain international recognition as it increases in confidence, while Taiwan seeks to strengthen its identity through local Taiwanese support. The emphasis on local identity has coincided with the rise of cultural democracy which pays great attention to local communities and their access to and participation in culture. The objectives of cultural policy may look splendid, ideal, visionary and correct on paper, but the focus and aims are now on how to make them a reality.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

This chapter started with a literature review on cultural policy exploring how cultural policy is defined as well as the domain of cultural policy. Following the broad-based concept of culture, the realm of contemporary cultural policy is regularly being extended to new areas of activity such as the hi-tech industries. But it inevitably maintains its traditional core of the high arts which always attract special attention

within sphere of arts patronage. Jeremy Ahearne observes that there are clear links between culture and political power and that in order to gain legitimacy a government must institute a cultural policy (Ahearne, 2009: 143) and this view corresponds closely to the way in which Taiwan's culture policy has developed through different government regimes since 1949.

This chapter also demonstrates the roles of democratising culture and cultural democracy in the development of Taiwan's cultural policy. The effect of making the arts and culture accessible and available to the public is not exclusive to politically democratic regimes, but it is a crucial concept for the democratic Taiwan of today. Following its international strategy of being seen to embrace global democratic values, Taiwan has fostered cultural democracy by stressing public participation and creative pursuits in cultural life. In addition, it emphasises that one of its significant cultural policy objectives is to promote national identity and branding, and this then connects the evolution of Taiwanese identity with the development of cultural policy. The distinction between explicit and implicit cultural policies then offers an approach to investigate the domain of cultural policy, which acknowledges that while some government ministries have an overt role in setting explicit cultural policies, other government organisations that are not specifically responsible for cultural affairs may also have influential roles in cultural policy making.

These concepts then formed an approach through which to examine the development of Taiwan's cultural policy in terms of its formulation, mechanism, composition, agencies and delivery from 1949 to 2017, the period during which Taiwan transformed from authoritarianism to democracy. Three phases of this period have been identified according to the way in which the Government set up its agencies of cultural policy. Between 1949 and 1981 the KMT's committees dominated the country's cultural affairs with both explicit as well as implicit cultural policies. The

1981 launch of the Council of Cultural Affairs and its subsequent upgrade to become the Ministry of Culture in 2012 are evidence of the Government's increasing emphasis on cultural affairs. With the initiation of the modern Ministry of Culture in Taiwan, most of the Government agencies responsible for cultural affairs have, at least in theory, now been brought together under a single Ministry. The question now is how that Ministry can make sure that other Ministries in the central government, as well as local cultural bureaux, follow the national cultural policies that it has set. Contemporary cultural policy in Taiwan tends to be set out in broad and comprehensive terms that offer the space and autonomy for cultural institutions supervised by the MOC to put their objectives into practice under national cultural policy.

Research shows that political change has influenced the shift in Taiwanese identity as well as the development of its cultural policy. Political democracy has promoted cultural democracy in the making of cultural policy so that today the mission of the MOC is to create equal cultural rights for everyone with the expectation that all other Ministries will act to promote MOC policies. Originally, cultural policy was put into practice by coercion and censorship while today the Government promotes liberalism and freedom. The original KMT policy was to defend the supremacy and homogeneity of the 'great Chinese culture', while today Taiwan acknowledges its cultural diversity and respects minority Taiwanese groups. There has been a comprehensive cultural shift in Taiwan from monocultural Chinese to multicultural Taiwanese, corresponding to the change of Taiwanese identity under different government regimes. This has been a clear demonstration of the interconnection between Taiwan's politics, cultural policy and national identity.



## **Chapter 4: The Performing Arts and Performing Arts Centres (PAC) in Taiwan**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter exemplifies how the performing arts can play a significant part in a people's national cultural life. They provide entertainment but at the same time they act as a mirror of the cultural state of the nation, and in developing that cultural identity, arts policy has a core role to play. Implementation of cultural policy is primarily through financial support of chosen activities by grants so, with its programme of events, a performing arts centre (PAC) is a venue where artists and companies are able to present their creative thoughts to the public, while at the same time passing on the messages that their funding organisations are keen to express. And of course, the preferences of the potential audience also have an influence on programming.

Michael Billig makes a good point in his 'Banal Nationalism' when he says that we are constantly but unwittingly prompted about our national identity as we lead our everyday lives by the 'flagging' signs we see around us (Billig, 1995). Institutions have a significant role in this and PACs are no exception because they unconsciously remind us of the nation we belong to through what they programme and the way they present their shows. It is not necessary to play the national anthem or wave a national flag for us to be reminded of our nationality when attending a state-owned PAC event, even if the PAC is not directly part of the government machine. Because of this, a country's identity, cultural policy and institutional autonomy are all significant factors in the life of a performing arts centre.

Taking these themes, this chapter looks at the context of the performing arts from the theoretical point of view with an investigation of definitions, and it then discusses

the evolution and development of performing arts centres in Taiwan. Its main focus is on the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (NCKSCC), later the National Performing Arts Centre (NPAC).

In carrying out this research, it has been a privilege to interview all the eight surviving Directors and Artistic Directors of the NCKSCC between its opening in 1987 and 2017, as well as the first directors of the two new centres of the NPAC. In addition, three of the NCKSCC's Chairmen and two Executive Secretaries of its Board as well as two Programme Managers have been interviewed to give a unique insight into this PAC from the point of view of its management and programming, as well as its relationship with government ministers and their policy. Three of the NCKSCC's Chairmen and Artistic Directors who agreed to be interviewed also served as Ministers of the Council for Cultural Affairs (CCA) and were thus able to offer penetrating opinions from different angles (see the Appendix 1 on p. 320-322 for the list of interviewees).

This chapter looks at the development of the performing arts in Taiwan, including government performing arts policy and the role of performing arts centres, to show how Taiwanese identity has transformed in parallel with changes in the political climate (see Chapter 2) and cultural development (see Chapter 3). It will also explore the organisation and governance of the NCKSCC to see how it acts as an arm's-length independent administrative corporation with cultural autonomy. This leads to an examination of whether the Government's cultural policy has had an influence on the work of the NCKSCC, in particular its programming. Finally, it investigates the establishment of the NPAC and the Centre's current situation. It concludes by analysing the relationship between the Ministry of Culture and the NPAC and the correlation between the NPAC and the development of Taiwanese identity.

## **4.2 The Performing Arts and Its Development in Taiwan**

### **4.2.1 The Definitions of the Performing Arts**

In his renowned series of books *Stage By Stage*, the writer and theatre historian, Philip Freund (2005) illustrates the origins of theatre and of the performing arts in general. He traces them back to antiquity from their beginnings in Egyptian and Greek mystical cult culture, as well as in other ancient civilizations in the Middle East, India, China and South America (Aztec and Inca). In Freund's view, the history of theatre and the performing arts shows an evolution from the primitive rituals and enactments of myths of ancient times to today's contemporary theatre (Freund, 2005: 29-39). A common feature of human cultures throughout history has been ritual, and ritual can be seen as the original foundation of the performing arts. The performance theorist and theatre director Richard Schechner, writes:

Rituals are collective memories encoded into actions... ritual is also a way for people to connect to a collective, to remember or construct a mythic past, to build social solidarity and to form or maintain a community. (Schechner, 2006: 87)

Schechner cites examples such as kabuki, kathakali, ballet, and the dance-drama of indigenous Australians to support his assertion. Even today, ritual elements of events or ceremonies can become part of theatre works or performing arts and the sacred Balinese Wali dances, church choirs, Taiwanese indigenous ritualised dance or Taiwanese opera, are good examples of this. The performing arts may have originated in and been influenced by ritual in ancient cultures, but even today, those rituals still play a central role in cultural life and therefore cultural identity as the way for people to be associated to their common, collective and shared community.

## Definitions

From this ancient origin in ritual and cult, the performing arts have, through a long process of development, evolved into an ever-widening range of forms that we experience today as ‘entertainment’ performed in front of an audience. Thus, the term ‘performing arts’ refers to all those forms of art in which artists use themselves as the medium to convey their thoughts and emotions. UNESCO (2019) attempts to define the range of the term as follows:

The performing arts range from vocal and instrumental music, dance and theatre to pantomime, sung verse and beyond. They include numerous cultural expressions that reflect human creativity and that are also found, to some extent, in many other intangible cultural heritage domains.

That definition covers what is generally understood to be the majority of the performing arts. However, recent times have seen a great diversification of what UNESCO calls ‘cultural expressions’ as increasing changes in the nature of performance have been explored and exploited by artists. This unstable situation, along with increased academic interest, has spawned other related terms such as ‘performative’, ‘performativity’, ‘performance arts’ and ‘performance theatre’ as people have attempted to disentangle the various genres and to create definitions that distinguish one kind of event from another. Such a variety of terms can make for confusion when talking about the arts since they are often used in different ways by different authors.

As a response, Richard Schechner has tried to bring order to the confusion of terms and to elucidate the concept of performance. He considers that ‘to perform can be understood in relation to: Being, Doing, Showing doing, and Explaining’ (Schechner, 2006: 28). In this sense, performance is a very broad idea which can be related to all kinds of everyday activity, and the performing arts belong to a

family of art forms. To take another view, the theatre specialist Marvin Carlson (2004: 71) writes that ‘involving the display of skills’ covers what we generally regard as the performing arts today, such as theatre, dance, concerts and the like. However, he also explains that during the 1970s and 1980s, with the enormous development of new performance types, ‘so complex and various has been such activity and so popular has it proven with the public and the media, that its very ubiquity and popularity have made it difficult to define’ (Carlson, 2004: 110).

Traditionally, theatre, dance and music are normally referred to as the ‘performing arts’. But, as Schechner and Carlson explain, the term ‘performance art’ has been introduced to cover a wider range of events than the traditional genres. With their long history and tradition, theatre, music and dance always comprise the core genres of performance art, but performance is not limited to these genres, and at a time when experimentation is frequent, performance art has become a very varied phenomenon in its manifestation (ibid.). The designation ‘performance art’ now includes new approaches to the visual arts, live arts, conceptual art, body arts, and contemporary dance<sup>17</sup>. Not surprisingly, in a rapidly changing world the terminology of the various kinds of performance art is still controversial and there is little agreement on precise definitions while new techniques and kinds of performance continuously appear.

The lack of agreement on defining and distinguishing the categories of performance arts gives rise to confusion when doing research particularly into theatre, dance and music because it is not always clear what definitions authors

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<sup>17</sup> The term ‘conceptual art’ was introduced by Marvin Carlson (2004: 111) who defined the conceptual artist as ‘one who selects material or experience for aesthetic consideration rather than forming something from the traditional raw materials of arts’. Another term ‘live art’ was introduced in 1994 by the Arts Council of Great Britain and seems to have been coined in an attempt to bring together an increasing number of forms of modern performance art such as installations with live performance, site-specific performance and body art.

are using. Part of the reason for this is that there are now more, and more varied, cross-border, and multidisciplinary art forms coming under the blanket terms of theatre, dance or music. One example of work which is hard to categorise is that of the Belgian multidisciplinary artist Jan Fabre, who is playwright, stage director, choreographer, visual artist, and designer.

Taking a pragmatic view, since creativity and freedom are crucial factors in all artistic activities, including the performing arts; it may be foolish to attempt to generate precise definitions which separate different art forms at a time of constant change. The performing arts keep changing and innovating in form and style so any literature, study, and research on it must follow the way in which art continuously shifts, challenges and converts traditional theory. Nevertheless, in order to make things distinct and focused in what follows, the term ‘performance art’ is used to refer to the broadest spectrum of performed activities, while ‘performing arts’ is limited to the kind of activity that is performed in a traditional-style venue such as Taiwan’s National Performing Arts Centre.

### **The situation in Taiwan**

In Taiwan, the Chinese term ‘*Biao yen yi shu*’ (表演藝術) was introduced from the Western world to mean ‘performing arts’. Specifically, it refers to the traditional concept of theatre, dance and music, and by extension to any kind of performing art so long as it is presented and performed on stage, site or venue.

According to the *Performing Art Group’s Development Foster Plan (2016)* prepared by Taiwan’s Ministry of Culture (MOC), one of its aims is to ‘ensure the performing arts have a long-term stable development’. The performing arts companies indicated in the plan present ‘music, dance, traditional theatre and contemporary theatre’ (MOC, 2016). In this way, the commonly accepted idea of ‘*Biao yen yi shu*’

(performing arts) in Taiwan is based on the traditional concept of Western performing arts but with the addition of traditional Chinese/Taiwanese theatre forms. This concept of '*Biao yen yi shu*' (performing arts) is widely used by government as well as in general cultural discourse in both Taiwan and the broader Chinese-speaking world. For example, there are performing arts divisions in government culture departments, performing arts departments in universities, and performing arts centres. Once activities are organised into categories in this way, it is easier for the Government to give grants and subsidies. By contrast, in Taiwan 'performance arts', are termed '*Hsing wei yi shu*' (行為藝術) which is different from 'performing arts' (*Biao yen yi shu*). The distinction is slightly different from that suggested by Western theory, but the semantic confusion in English referred to above does not occur in Taiwan. To combine the review of the literature on 'performance arts/performing arts' and Taiwan's '*Biao yen yi shu*' (performing arts), the definition of 'performing arts' in this thesis will be restricted to the concept of theatre (contemporary and traditional), dance and music, and by extension to any new kind of performing art so long as it is presented on stage/site/venue.

#### **4.2.2 The Development of the Performing Arts**

In an interview with Taiwan's Central News Agency in 2018, Lin Hwai-min, the founder of the iconic Taiwanese contemporary dance company, Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan, talked about the development of Taiwan's performing arts over the course of his career:

The performing arts are not just a one-evening show. They are the accumulation of the core features of Taiwanese society; they are the aggregation of the feelings of Taiwanese people, and they follow the way in which people look at things differently generation by generation. Achievements, attainments and succession do not emerge out of the void but

are a sequence of concatenation and evolvement. (Lin, interview of 2018 by the Central News Agency)

This emphasises that the performing arts are a core part of Taiwanese culture, and that they have developed throughout Taiwan's complex history. As discussed in Chapter 2, Taiwan today has developed a hybrid culture. The original culture of the indigenous people has been comprehensively altered by the effects of immigrant cultures: the arrival of early Han Chinese, the short stay of the Dutch and Spanish, Japanese colonisation, the influx of mainland Chinese and the recent immigration from south-east Asia. All these influences have merged to provide the different faces of Taiwan's performing arts under different government regimes with different cultural identities.

In addition, cultural policy and the way in which it is formulated plays an important part in cultural development, as discussed in Chapter 3. The influence of politicians on the development of the performing arts in Taiwan is, in the main, to provide finance and to oversee the provision of suitable venues in which their policy aims can be brought about. This section will examine Taiwan's performing arts development through a time of shifting Taiwanese identity and cultural policy focusing on the development of the traditional genres of performing arts: theatre, dance and music.

#### **4.2.2.1 The Performing Arts and Taiwanese Identity**

Traditional Taiwanese performing art forms existed long before that term was introduced. According to the Taiwanese historian of theatre Lin He-yi, there were historical domestic performing art genres such as 'Taiwanese opera' (*Ko tsai hsi*, 歌仔戲), puppetry (*Bu dai hsi*, 布袋戲), *Nan guan* (南管) and *Pei guan* (北管) music bands which served along with other forms of entertainment and religion, to provide a foundation for Taiwanese cultural life (Lin, 2017: 18-22). At the same time, the rituals



of indigenous and Han Taiwanese were also important components of daily life (Lin, 2017: 54-57).

### **Japanese Colonial and Western influence**

The modern approach to the performing arts was introduced to Taiwan during the Japanese colonial period. The Taiwanese theatre theorist and writer, Ma Sen (2010) comments that the modern theatre of Taiwan, China and Japan were all transplanted from western theatre. Japan was the earliest recipient of western art forms during its Meiji Restoration in the late nineteenth century when western-style realist theatre was introduced. China followed in the early twentieth century. Western theatre appeared in Shanghai where plays were performed by students of church schools, and Chinese students returning from Japan brought new art forms with them. Eventually, western theatre found its way to Taiwan which, as a Japanese colony, was inevitably affected by the trend of westernisation spreading throughout Japan (Ma, 2010: 5). Nevertheless, since it shares a cultural background with China, Taiwan has also been strongly influenced by Chinese ideas.

Theatre theorist Chiu Kun-liang, a former Chairman of the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (2004-2006) and Minister of Taiwan's Council of Cultural Affairs (2006-2007), explains that when modern theatre was introduced to Taiwan in the 1920s during the Japanese colonial period, it became one of many elements of a theatre spectrum in Taiwan which influenced traditional Taiwanese theatre (Chiu, 1997: 14). Through the introduction of a western education system to Taiwan by the Japanese colonial government, contemporary disciplines such as modern dance and classical music were taught in schools (Lin, 2017: 142-143).

The dancer and choreographer Tsai Jui-yueh (1921-2005), one of the pioneers of Taiwanese contemporary dance, was born in Japanese colonial Taiwan and studied

dance in Japan. Tsai's 1946 work *Song of India* is believed to be the first contemporary Taiwanese dance piece (Encyclopedia of Taiwan, 2016). Many talented Taiwanese music students were encouraged to study western classical music in Japan at this time and they then became the first generation of Taiwanese classical musicians. One of them was Chiang Wen-yeh (1910-1983) who was the first Taiwanese composer to gain an international reputation and whose works established the new face of Taiwanese music (Taiwan Music Institute, 2016).

Thus, although the seeds of the western style contemporary performing arts were planted in Taiwan during the Japanese colonial period, the national identity of those artists at that time could be said to be Japanese because of their training (Chiu, 2019: 40). One reason why Taiwanese intellectuals partly endorsed the Japanese colonial government is because of their eagerness for modern western civilisation (Chen, 2006: 157-216). However, in reality, these artists had a Taiwanese cultural background which was overlaid by their Japanese training and this meant that the work they created had influences from both Japan and Taiwan. Their work was clearly Japanese-influenced, but was distinctly different from purely Japanese work created in mainland Japan. The performing art works created by this generation of Taiwanese artists were the beginnings of a new, specifically Taiwanese genre of contemporary performing arts.

### **Chinese identity imposed and reformed**

According to Chiu Kun-liang, another critical period for Taiwanese performing arts occurred after World War Two when Japan lost the war (Chiu, 2019: 40), Taiwan ceased to be a colony and returned to the Republic of China (ROC). The subsequent evolution of Taiwan's performing arts forms the basis of the research in this thesis. Both Ma and Chiu describe the period between 1945 and 1949 as a short era of 'open

and lively' theatre creation (Ma, 2010: 15-18; Chiu, 1997: 14). Becoming a province of the ROC and switching its national language from Japanese to Mandarin transformed Taiwan's cultural identity while the introduction of left-wing ideology also had great impact that resulted in the development of a flourishing performing arts scene (ibid.).

However, in 1949 the nationalist Chinese government (KMT) lost the civil war to the communists and transferred to Taiwan, along with more than one million mainland Chinese. With this shift in the balance of the population, there was also a rapid shift in national identity as well as the dominant culture and the social hierarchy. Local Taiwanese artists were at the sharp end of these changes, especially those whose natural mode of expression was still Japanese. Anybody who created their work in Japanese was now suspected of being against the new regime and was under huge pressure to fit in with the new ways (Chiu, 2019: 40-41). Taiwanese theatre scholar Geng Yi-wei explains that at this time cultural identity in Taiwan was very much led by the 'state apparatus', in which language policy was an influential component (Geng, interview of 8 June 2018).

As discussed in Section 3.3.1 of Chapter 3, everything changed after 1949 when martial law was implemented. Freedom of creativity was curtailed, censorship was introduced and scripts for theatre, film, TV, song lyrics, books and indeed everything related to 'free speech' was generally restricted. A traditional Chinese cultural identity was forced on Taiwan and Taiwanese people, and 'this priority underpinned the KMT's direction in cultural policy—"sino-lisation"—from 1949 to 1971' (Wang, 2014: 36). The Chinese arts forms promoted by the KMT were entitled 'national' and the Committee for Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture was founded in 1967 to launch a 'Chinese Culture Renaissance Movement in order to resist the Cultural

Revolution in mainland China' (Wang, 2014: 37). From that date, Chinese culture and mainland Chinese artists took the dominant roles in Taiwan's arts sphere.

Performing arts at this time were therefore conservative, safe and conformist. One significant result was that the army supported/owned traditional and modern theatre troupes<sup>18</sup> that became an important component of the cultural life of Taiwan and gave a practical demonstration of the kind of theatrical performance that the state officially supported. It was at this time that the notion of state performing arts companies developed in Taiwan, and today's Guo Guang Opera Company (國光劇團), was established in 1995 by a merger of the National Opera troupes from the Air Force, Army and Navy under the Ministry of National Defence. This is now Taiwan's only national theatre company and it presents Peking Opera in both traditional and contemporary forms under the administration of the Ministry of Culture (Wong, 2014: 127-128). But significantly, the name 'National Opera' was dropped when Guo Guang was formed as by 1995 Taiwan was already progressing towards democracy and this change had an influence in the arts circle. Ji Huei-ling, a former art journalist and now theatre critic and Director of the Online Performing Arts Review Platform, recalls that when she reported the launch of Guo Guang she suddenly realised that the term 'National Opera' had disappeared in Taiwan. There was no government proclamation that 'National Opera' would revert to 'Peking Opera', but it seemed quite natural that neither the Government nor the public would refer to the 'National Opera' any longer. Ji felt that 'there was neither argument nor debate, it just happened. For me, this is a good illustration of the way Taiwan's cultural scene was transformed' (Ji, interview of 10 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author).

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<sup>18</sup> Many traditional theatre (especially Peking Opera) actors followed the KMT military troops immigrating to Taiwan. In order to offer appropriate positions for them, the military therefore launched their own theatre companies and this became a unique phenomenon of Taiwan's theatre history. (Lin, 2017: 232-233). More details see Chapter 5.

The name Guo Guang (國光) means ‘the glory of the nation’ in Chinese and is a reference to the Company’s national status. But losing the title ‘National Opera’ which linked Taiwan with a Chinese identity, and reverting to the Company’s original name ‘Peking Opera’ is a sign that ‘Peking Opera’ is nowadays a genre of *Taiwanese* theatre and, as Ji (2018) says, ‘it is a traditional theatre form from China, but it now flourishes in Taiwan with a local character. It is Taiwanese Peking Opera’ (ibid.). There is no such thing as ‘National Opera’ any longer; instead, every theatre genre keeps its traditional name in forming part of the Taiwanese theatre family. This is a significant example of the way that Taiwanese culture has evolved over the years and, as Ma points out, cultural development always runs in parallel with the political situation (Ma, 2010: 20).

### **Influence from international exchange**

Taiwan has always been an enthusiastic participant in international arts. During the days of the KMT regime, despite seeing itself as the guardian of traditional Chinese culture, it was always open to influences from outside the country. The KMT depended heavily on support from the US and it tried hard to cement relationships with many other countries. The 1960s were a time of cultural exchange and fluidity in Taiwan and while communist China was a sealed society behind an iron curtain, Taiwan was absorbing the nutrition of western culture, mainly under the influence of the US.

It was not easy for Taiwanese people to travel abroad during the martial law period (1949-1987), but some determined artists found ways to go to the west and they brought new arts ideas back to Taiwan. Ma Sen (2010: 23-25) comments that after the 1970s, those who studied abroad returned to Taiwan and introduced western concepts in the performing arts to Taiwan. The new generation of Taiwanese artists of that time, with their background of Chinese identity mixed with a strong western cultural

influence, started to create their own cultural identity looking back to the land, the people, the arts, and the culture of Taiwan. Wu Jing-jyi, Taiwanese theatre guru and former Chairman of the NCKSCC (2006-2007), had worked in the La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club in New York City and brought back to Taiwan the concept of experimental theatre. He formed the Lanlin Theatre Troupe in Taipei in 1980 (Ma, 2012: 101) and, in an interview, explained that because of the close relationship between the US and Taiwan, the US was the main foreign destination for Taiwanese students. The 1960s and 1970s saw vigorous development of ‘experimental theatre’ in the US where young people were concerned about socially controversial issues and protested against war and social inequality. ‘It was natural that those concepts and movements were brought back to Taiwan’s performing arts circle by Taiwanese students returning from the US. I am a good example, as is Lin Hwai-min’ (Wu, interview of 9 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author).

The theatre sector in Taiwan then entered a new era and, according to Ma Sen (2012), this was inspirational for many of its members as it created a fruitful theatre milieu in Taiwan with the foundation of many theatre companies that are still very active, such as the Performance Workshop Theatre Company, U Theatre, the Ping Fong Acting Troupe, and the Godot Theatre Company. In addition, a number of avant-garde experimental theatres developed in the 1980s, despite the conservative nature of Taiwanese society. Young theatre activists challenged political norms of the time and dared to tackle forbidden issues, such as homosexuality. Founded in 1988, the Critical Point Theatre Troupe is one example. At the same time, traditional theatres felt the impact of western theatre theories and tried to find innovative ways of presenting new content and attracting new audiences. Founded in 1986 by the Peking Opera artist Wu Shin-kuo, the Contemporary Legend Theatre’s debut work opened a new page of intercultural performance in Taiwan. *The Kingdom of Desire* was based on

Shakespeare's *Macbeth* but was performed in a style based on Peking Opera (Ma, 2012: 101-103).

The first person to obtain a doctorate in Dance in Taiwan was Liu Feng-shueh who was Director of the NCKSCC from 1988 to 1990. Liu not only introduced the labanotation<sup>19</sup> system for notating dance movement and thereby codifying modern Chinese dance, but also researched and reconstructed the dances of indigenous Taiwanese, Confucianist and Tang dynasty people. Her company, Neo-Classic Dance Company, was founded in 1976 based on:

Transforming the body into written annals, and inscribing in it every sentiment and sense in the world of men. Liu Feng-shueh's aim was to create modern work which showed a respect for tradition, but was at the same time influenced by historical awareness of dance, blending Chinese humanist culture and western art. (Neo-Classic Company, 2015: 4)

Another significant influence in the development of dance in Taiwan was Lin Hwai-min and his Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan. Lin was first inspired by José Limón and then studied with Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham<sup>20</sup>. He founded Cloud Gate in 1973 using the name of the oldest dance in China, and he 'adopted this classic name for the first contemporary dance company in any Chinese speaking community' using as the basis of his dance training 'meditation, *qi gong* (氣功), an ancient form of breathing exercise, internal martial arts, modern dance, ballet and calligraphy' (Cloud Gate Dance Theatre, 2016). Lin's works are mostly related to Taiwanese subjects, and in the opinion of Taiwanese cultural study scholar Wang Li-

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<sup>19</sup> According to Ann Hutchinson Guest (2005), the movement and dance researcher, 'labanotation or Kinetography Laban, is the system of recording movement originated by Rudolf Laban in the 1920s. By this now scientifically based method, all forms of movement, ranging from the simplest to the most complex, can be accurately written' (p.5).

<sup>20</sup> José Limón, Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham are influential figures of the history of modern dance. Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham are specially praised as 'the two great pillars of modern dance' (Sadler's Wells, 2020).

jung (2014: 42), Cloud Gate is the most important example of ‘the rise of Taiwanese consciousness from the 1970s to the 1990s’ because of its intention to ‘open dialogue with the whole of society to consider self-definition, cultural identity, and collective memory in the performing arts’.

In the same way, increasing numbers of Taiwanese music students who had studied overseas returned to Taiwan with what they had learned in the West, but also looked back to traditional Taiwanese material in order to develop contemporary Taiwanese music. Praised as the godfather of Taiwanese music, Hsu Tsang-houei (1929-2001) was educated in western classical music during the Japanese colonial period, and then went for further study in France in the 1950s where he was inspired to undertake field research into Taiwanese music during the 1960s. As one of the most influential musicians in Taiwan, ‘he was a vanguard of modern music in Taiwan and also one of the leading proponents of ethnomusicological fieldwork’ (Taiwan Music Institute, 2016). Hsu was followed by many other Taiwanese musicians and composers who tried to combine east and west, classic and modern to make the new face of contemporary music in Taiwan. Among such followers are Ma Shui-long (1939-2015), Hsiao Ty-zen (1938-2015), Pan Hwang-long (1945-) and Qian Nan-zhang (1948-).

This generation of Taiwanese artists in theatre, dance and music created an artistic milestone by establishing the new face of the performing arts in Taiwan’s ‘China’ (ROC) using knowledge and techniques gained from the western world. But they also felt the importance of connecting their work with the land of Taiwan and of trying to shape a new image for Chinese/Taiwanese performing arts which epitomised the Taiwanese Chineseness of that era, mirroring the atmosphere of society of their time.



## **The development of Taiwanese identity**

The lifting of martial law in 1987 and the gradual introduction of democracy was a significant event in the development of Taiwanese performing arts. Free expression, the abandonment of censorship, frequent changes of government, awareness of native Taiwanese matters and re-communication with China (PRC), all made Taiwanese artists reconsider who they were as well as the nature of Taiwanese culture (Su, 2003: 226-236). As a result, the shift of Taiwanese identity is reflected in the development of its performing arts. Taiwanese theatre study scholar, Geng Yi-wei observes that the new generation of Taiwanese artists who grew up after martial law was lifted 'imagines' the country very differently from its predecessor. Geng explains:

They realised that the so-called 'dream of a unified China' is not realistic. That ambition has been relinquished. The young generation will pay more attention to local culture and put more effort into Taiwanisation and after a few decades, when this generation has taken over as the backbone of society and become the decision makers of the country, the Chinese element of Taiwanese identity will continue to decline while the Taiwanese element will take over as its core. (Geng, interview of 8 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

The fact is that nowadays cultural diversity is one of the main features of Taiwanese culture and this is accepted by the Taiwanese Government. Today's Taiwanese performing arts scene also celebrates its multi-faceted nature with a spectrum of diversity.

The independent Taiwanese producer Sun Ping spoke about her experiences working with the new generation of Taiwanese artists. Sun feels that the new generation doesn't really need to care about what their identity is because they were born in a democratic state with a confirmed Taiwanese identity. The new generation learns *tai chi* (太極), *qi gong* (氣功) and martial arts, which are regarded as basic body movement methods although they originated in China. They also learn western

contemporary dance techniques or Japanese butoh, and again these are regarded as basic skills for strengthening the body, and have nothing to do with whether they recognise their cultural identity as Chinese, Japanese or American. They are all merely approaches to making their dance works unique in just the same way that they might use digital technology or new media for their creations. These are all methods which artists apply, but they are not the core of their creative work. But Sun also thinks:

The new generation of artists were born in Taiwan, educated in Taiwan and live in Taiwan. They are Taiwanese so they naturally aim to look for Taiwanese topics and to make connections between them and the international arts world. The most important thing therefore is the innovation and quality of their creative work, and that is no longer related to cultural identity. (Sun, interview of 11 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

In the same way, the Music Director of Taipei Philharmonic Chorus, Ku Yu-chung who was born in 1970s is of the opinion that, although the traditions of chorus and symphony are from the West, they are treasures for the whole of humanity and have become the foundations and life blood of music. Ku feels that perhaps some would complain that the Taipei Philharmonic Chorus performs works of *foreign* classical music which are not *Taiwanese*, and it is true that Chorus is not able to adapt works like Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* into a 'Taiwanese version' in the way that western plays can be revised into Taiwanese versions by Taiwanese theatre troupes. However, Ku believes those works of classical music are universal and the most important thing is that they are performed by the Taiwanese artists.

When at some stage those foreign music works become familiar and meaningful for Taiwan, they evolve into a part of the spectrum of Taiwanese culture. They are a collective memory shared by all Taiwanese people connected to those works, and therefore they are Taiwanese. (Ku, interview of 8 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author).

This journey in which Taiwanese artists search for Taiwanisation has coincided exactly with the shift in Taiwanese identity. Ji Huei-ling feels that once martial law was lifted, the new generation of Taiwanese artists were no longer so enthusiastic about searching for Taiwanese identity in the newly democratic country. Their life memories were not occupied by the heavy historic shadow of an identity dilemma as was the case for their predecessors. As a general observation, Taiwanese artists still have concern for global agendas such as the enduring fight against injustice and inequality. They might still feel anxious, but if they do it is no longer anxiety about national identity, but more about individual concerns (Ji, 2019: 387-388).

To conclude, there has been an artistic journey from the early era when preserving traditional Chinese theatre was the overriding aim, to the creation of a contemporary Chinese performing arts scene, and then to the search for a Taiwanese cultural code which aims to make Taiwan recognisably different. Today, a casual observer might remark that the performing arts scene and artists in Taiwan are not so different from the West: their concerns are almost wholly invested in the creative process and production of individual art works of high quality. This process of evolution in Taiwan's performing arts scene has run in parallel with Taiwan's increasing liberalisation and epitomises the evolution of Taiwanese identity.

#### **4.2.2.2 Taiwan's Performing Arts Policy**

According to Derrick Chong (2010: 33), 'state (public) subsidy for the arts, either direct or indirect, remains a major preoccupation regarding public policy and the arts'. However, there is always an argument about whether the government should subsidise artistic activities or whether subsidy compromises the independence of the arts from government intervention. Chong lists some reasons for and against state subsidy. Since most people regard the arts as worthwhile and 'good', the government might feel it is

obliged to support it and make art accessible to everyone, and not just to an elite sector of society. Also, 'the arts produce positive externalities in the form of public benefits, such as civilizing society, enhancing national pride, and engendering a coactive identity that outweigh private benefits' (Chong, 2010: 34). This very much influences the way the government respects and manages the arts. Increasingly, countries realise that the arts can bring huge economic benefits for tourism, business and jobs through what is today referred to as 'creative and cultural industry'. Nevertheless, Chong also identifies disadvantages, such as a 'high degree of state paternalism', and how difficult it is in reality to create 'arts for everyone' (ibid.). All these points are relevant to government's cultural policy in the performing arts in Taiwan, and this section will explore how performing arts policy has evolved.

### **Baumol's Cost Disease**

Unlike other components of cultural policy which can create economic benefit, the performing arts are commonly subsidised by governments worldwide. In thinking about the financial aspects of artistic enterprises, the performing arts are a prime example of 'Baumol's Cost Disease' because, as time passes, artists' wages and the cost of productions rise consistently but 'productivity' is static. This phenomenon was observed and introduced by William J. Baumol and William G. Bowen in 1966 while they were conducting research into the performing arts sector, and 'Baumol's Cost Disease' nowadays is widely used to describe those professions and services which lack growth in productivity (Heilbrun, 2003: 91).

There is clearly a distinction here between on the one hand, different kinds of artistic performances such as high art western and Chinese (Peking) opera or symphony concerts as promoted by most performing arts centres and, on the other, strictly commercial productions such as musicals or popular drama. These latter aim

at long, and sometimes very long, runs of performances which can recoup production costs and, with luck, make a substantial profit. Yet, many high arts organisations do not expect their productions to be profitable. Production costs are characteristically high, performance runs are short and audience support may be low, especially for innovative and experimental work. All this means that income from the box office rarely covers the costs and funding has to be sought elsewhere, whether from government subsidy or commercial or philanthropic sponsorship. Taiwan is no exception to this reality.

### **The evolution of performing arts policy**

In 1949 when the KMT government transferred to Taiwan and instituted martial law, the central ideology of cultural policy was compatibility with KMT party's nationalism and its project of the 'rejuvenation of Chinese culture' (Su, 2003: 37). The authoritarian process of policy-making was 'top-down' and demonstrated the enforcement of the dominant political elite's preference for Chinese culture (Su, 2003: 99). As a result, according to Taiwanese theatre scholar Su Kuei-chih, the essence of the performing arts during this era was mainly:

fighting back against Communist China, but somehow ignoring the customs and culture of native Taiwanese. It was disconnected from Taiwanese society and made no distinction between KMT Party work and government work, i.e. politics interfered with culture. (Su, 2003: 100)

Censorship and prohibition were used as the main tool of performing arts policy. The content of performances had to promote traditional Chinese culture; it should be evidently anti-communist and should not violate the KMT's definition of good customs and ethics. There were many performing arts policies regarding these agendas, such as *Regulation of Managing Entertainment and Arts Business* (1979) which

stipulated that the script of any performance had to be approved by the Government authorities (Chiou, 2017: 69-74).

Gradually, in the late phases of martial law period there was some slackening of this dictatorial policy as democracy began to be felt and consideration for Taiwan's cultural diversity emerged (Su, 2003: 215-16). At this time there was some discrepancy within government between the cultural policies of such hardline organisations as the Ministry of Interior (MOI), the Government Information Office (GIO), Taiwan garrison command and others, who continued to censor performing arts content, while the policy of some other arms of government such as the Ministry of Education (MOE) took a more liberal line (Chiou, 2017: 72-73). Once again, both the brute-force explicit policies of hardliners and the softer implicit policies of other, more sympathetic operators are simultaneously at work as discussed in Section 3.2.4 of Chapter 3.

The MOE supervised the performing arts for a considerable time until the Council of Cultural Affairs was established in 1981 and then supervision was completely transferred when the Ministry of Culture (MOC) was launched in 2012. Thinking that the arts are a mechanism for social education, the MOE's policy for the performing arts was included within a 'cultural and educational policy'. This had ambitions in three fields: to support those public performing arts companies which were under the supervision of the MOE; to provide financial support for other performing arts companies; and to build new performing arts venues (Su, 2003: 44; 158-159). The work of the 'public performing arts companies' that received funding from the MOE or the other arms of government such as the Province of Taiwan, mainly fell within the category of National Opera, National Music and Western classical music, giving an idea of the Government's priorities during that period (Su, 2003: 145).

Hand in hand with this vivid development of Taiwanese artistic society, the launch of the Council of Cultural Affairs showed the determination of the Government

to progress with its activities in cultural governance. It also illustrates the shift in the official way of thinking about the arts from being a component of education to being the essence of culture in Taiwan (Su, 2003: 45-6; 226-8). Following the tendency towards democracy, the main approach to implementing the CCA's arts policy was through grants and subsidy and the National Culture and Arts Foundation was established to support Taiwanese performing arts companies' international tours, to subsidise international cultural exchange projects, and to set up Taiwanese overseas cultural centres (Kuo, interview of 28 June 2018). As a result, the CCA set up *the International Performance Troupe Cultivation Plan* in 1992, and it then developed into *the Performing Arts Group's Development Foster Plan* in 1998 which allocated grants to select companies (Tchen, 2013: 36). The grant covers international tours as well as the costs of maintaining companies' daily operations, such as renting office and rehearsal space, and paying the salaries of the management team. In return, the CCA expected companies to present new productions regularly and to carry out periodic evaluation (Su, 2003: 243-4).

The allocation of government money in support of international tours has been an annual practice since 1992 which continued even after the CCA was promoted in status and moved to the Ministry of Culture in 2012. In 2013, the MOC initiated a plan with an increase in funding of NT\$ 100,000,000 ( £ 2,500,000) for five designated National Portfolio Companies: Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan, Min-Hwa Yuan Arts & Cultural Group, Ju Percussion Group, Paper Windmill Theatre and U Theatre (Performing Arts Review Magazine, 2013). In addition, in 2016, grants were advertised under *the Performing Arts Group's Development Foster Plan*. 142 companies applied and 81 were selected (music: 16; dance: 22; traditional theatre: 19; modern theatre: 24) with a total grant allocation of NT\$152,800,000 ( £ 3,820,000) (MOC, 2016).

Meanwhile, the NCAF also subsidises arts organisations for different schemes and projects. For performing arts, as stated in the NCAF's 2016 annual report, a total of 725 projects were funded. Among them, 463 projects belonged to performing arts (music: 203; dance: 108; theatre: 152) amounting to 64% of the total. In terms of the amount of funding, the NCAF granted a total of NT\$116,900,473 (£ 2,922,512) in 2016, of which 62%, NT\$72,227,100 (£ 1,805,678), went to performing arts (music: NT\$21,530,800 (£ 538,270) ; dance: NT\$25,084,000 (£ 627,100) ; theatre: NT\$25,612,300 (£ 640,308). These figures are a reflection of the prominent role that performing arts have played in Taiwan's cultural spectrum. In addition, the NCAF has initiated projects specifically for the performing arts, such as 'Pursuit of Excellence in Performing Arts' that aims to reinforce performing arts companies and artists; 'Young Stars, New Vision' that offers comprehensive resources and platforms for talented artists and young practitioners who have just graduated from college; and 'Glove Puppetry Production and Presentation' that encourages traditional glove puppetry companies to collaborate with playwrights and directors in order to reinvigorate the traditional theatre form (NCAF, 2019).

In addition, there are subsidies from local government for individual productions or for regular long-term support for performing arts companies (Kuo, 2011: 168). Some local governments have proposed their own plans to attract companies to their cities or counties. Alternatively, local governments may offer renovated local heritage sites or other unused spaces free of charge to accommodate companies. In order to encourage arts philanthropy, sponsorship and other forms of support from private enterprise, a number of tax inducements have been introduced such as the *Cultural and Arts Reward Act* (2002) (Su, 2003: 245).

Over the past 70 years, the evolution of Taiwan's performing arts policy has progressed from censorship to assistance and then to grant-support. Do Taiwanese



performing arts companies now rely on government financial support so heavily that they could not survive in a market-orientated environment and are therefore obliged to follow government policy? According to Li Chia-chi who was the NCKSCC's Programme Manager (2012-2014), and is now the Chief Editor of *Performing Arts Review Magazine*, 'artistic creations should not comply with any policy. They are the means to consider and examine policy' (interview of 27 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author). However, Ju Tzong-ching, the former Artistic Director of the NCKSCC (2001-2004) and the current Chairman of the NPAC, agrees that support from the Government is vital to Taiwanese performing arts companies. 'In other words, through following the policy guidelines, what the Government encourages would influence what artists produce' (interview of 3 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author).

Of course, since Taiwan became a democratic country, political ideology is, at least in theory, no longer an issue and arts policy has been directed in more universal and general ways under the MOC. Nevertheless, as the Taiwanese theatre study scholar, Geng Yi-wei observes, when martial law was lifted, Taiwanese performing artists dealt with many political issues that were critical of the Government as they expressed their political ideals. After the 1990s, when support from the CCA and NCAF began, the state could 'influence' its performing arts policy through subsidy. Geng does not go so far as to term this as deliberate state interference, but thinks that it nevertheless 'hints at state involvement' and has the effect of limiting artistic expression. He feels that:

The situation is that performing arts companies not only do not address political controversy, but also try to distance themselves from political issues. It seems to me that, because change in government between the different political parties has become a normality, the more that artists avoid making political statements, the more easily they would be able to obtain government

support. (Geng, interview of 8 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

It is a worrying state of affairs when in a democratic society artists feel unable to demonstrate political preferences because to do so might prejudice applications for state funding. Perhaps it is merely that performing arts companies conduct self-censorship imagining that in this way they can acquire state funding more smoothly. Or perhaps this is because explicit political expressions are unfashionable in a more mature democratic society. This is not something they will willingly confess, but there is no doubt that Taiwanese performing arts companies rely heavily on government financial support for their continued existence and this means that they have to be cautious when applying for the Government grants.

To conclude, Taiwanese performing arts policy has evolved in parallel with the political climate to embrace the shift of Taiwan's identity from Chinese to Taiwanese. The establishment of the CCA was a milestone in performing arts policy, and democracy at least notionally prevents polices from prohibiting material that the authorities dislike, while it encourages liberty of artistic expression. The main feature of performing arts policy nowadays is substantial state funding. Although this illustrates strong support from the Government, it also hints at potential concern for the independence of artistic creation.

#### **4.2.3 The Development of Performing Arts Centres (PACs)**

Academic research into the management of the performing arts tends to focus on performing arts companies and their productions rather than performing arts centres which present or host such companies (Lambert & Williams, 2017a: 1). But a performing arts centre (PAC) is not just a lifeless building and in a press interview Taiwan's current Minister of Culture, Cheng Li-chun, said that 'the Artistic Director

and the team vitalise the PAC and their artistic standpoints invigorate the PAC's character' (Cheng, 2019). This section therefore will explore the evolution of PACs in general and then look at their development in Taiwan.

### **PAC evolution**

'At the core of the missions of most performing arts centres are the performances that appear on their stages, and related artistic and community activities' (Micocci, 2017: 63). How can those missions and objectives be achieved? In practice, this is the task of the leadership and the programming team of the PAC (Williams, Harris & Lambert, 2017: 244) and indeed, all of the Artistic Directors of the NCKSCC interviewed in this research project (see Table 4.3 on p.182) claim that they personally are the decision makers, supported by their programming teams. Together they make up the heart of the Centre. But a PAC often carries out other functions such as contributing to civil vitality and arts society as well as encouraging a rich cultural identity (Lambert & Williams, 2017a: 1). When government funding is involved, government cultural policy inevitably influences a PAC's vision and mission, along with consideration of its local community. As a result, the evolution of a PAC is affected by both cultural policy and the country's identity.

Based on their core work of programming, PACs have progressed through four different generations: 1) a home for the high arts, 2) a place used for performing arts, 3) a community centre for all, and 4) a nexus with multi-functions (Wolff, 2017: 21). In the beginning, PACs were commonly built as iconic landmarks and were normally the 'home' of the high arts such as ballet, opera, and classical concerts which 'were likely to showcase the programmes and be directed towards elite audiences' (Wolff: 2017: 22-24). PACs then were perceived as places that had an increasingly valuable influence in the surrounding area, bringing in a wide range of artists, companies and

audiences with more connection to their location (Wolff, 2017: 25-30). PACs then evolved into ‘community centres’ offering ‘inclusiveness and community-based programmes’ with outreach events. The goal then was to make PACs more accessible to a broader and more diverse community, so that its audience not only became more local but also broader in terms of the social spectrum (Wolff, 2017: 32-34). In the last stage, the PAC becomes a multi-function ‘nexus’, not only keeping its traditional roles from the previous three generations, but also serving as a creativity and innovation centre to create diverse programmes and to ‘enable audiences of all types to participate in those programmes’ (Wolff, 2017: 35). They develop into centres with multiple functions for artists, the audience, the community and the area (Wolff, 2017: 39-40).

With different roles and functions during its evolution, the PAC’s relationship with the variety of artists and different audience groups accordingly reflects the way cultural policy is delivered and the identity of the country is represented and constructed. PACs evolve along with society, policy and identity.

### **The development of Taiwan’s PACs**

According to the Taiwanese theatre scholar, Chou Yi-ton (2017: 22-24, 37-28), after 1949, there was a mere handful of performing arts venues in Taiwan, mainly offering spaces for performing arts. In the capital Taipei, for instance, the historical Zhongshan Hall was built in 1936 by the Japanese colonial government as a multi-function convention centre and it is still a venue used for a variety of functions today. After the KMT moved to Taiwan, a few additional venues were launched: the Armed Forces Cultural Centre was built in 1957 specifically for traditional theatre, and the multi-functional Shih-chien Hall appeared in 1966. However, they are venues mainly designed to put on a variety of types of performance, and because they lack programming teams they cannot be counted as true performing arts centres. In 1972,

the National Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall was opened, primarily as a professional performing arts venue, but this again is a performance space for rent that does not create its own programming. These were landmark buildings that provided venues for ‘high arts’ programming to attract elite audiences (Wolff, 2017: 22). Without programming departments, these centres have not progressed beyond acting as landlords, although they remain venues for the performing arts in Taiwan. Meanwhile, as discussed in Section 3.3.1 of Chapter 3, the Government launched its *Cultural Construction Plan* and, between 1981 and 1986, it aimed to increase the number of local cultural centres so that people could enjoy the arts in every county of the country. This was not only the beginning of local PACs, but also of local community centres (Tchen 2013: 116-117).

Taiwan’s first professional PAC was not launched until 1987, but the idea was conceived much earlier in 1975 after the death of President Chiang Kai-shek and the Executive Yuan decided to build a memorial hall with a theatre and a concert hall to commemorate him. The National Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall was opened in 1980, and the National Theatre and Concert Hall in 1987 (NCKSCC, 2007). Although the Memorial Hall, the National Theatre and Concert Hall are all situated in the same precinct under the name of the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Park, they each have their own separate governing body. The Government of the time regarded the establishment of this national landmark PAC as one of its most momentous cultural decisions according to Huang Pi-twan, the NCKSCC’s Artistic Director from 2010 to 2013 (interview of 4 December 2015). Since then, the most significant event has been the legislation for an *Act for the Establishment of a National Performing Arts Centre* and the resulting creation of the National Performing Arts Centre by upgrading the NCKSCC in 2014. This new phase of Taiwan’s performing arts centres will be discussed in the next section.

### **4.3 Constructing Taiwan's National Performing Arts Centre**

The essence of performing arts is the process by which artists express their creative thoughts and feelings to an audience. Through time, the performances reflect any shift in national and cultural identity and, at a more prosaic level, show the way artists can receive government support by either conforming with cultural policy or distancing themselves from it in their work. Artists are concerned about how they can persuade a Performing Arts Centre to programme their work, and how they can collaborate with PACs to present it. In this way, the PAC itself gains a character that reflects the evolution of both national and cultural identity and how artists interact with cultural policy. The character of the PAC springs from the work of the artists it presents, but at the same time, for a government to propose the establishment of a PAC is a significant part of its cultural policy. Programming at the PAC then has to be sensitive to government cultural policy, especially when it is funded by the government. Hence, the programming at a government PAC is both a bottom-up process springing from the artists and the way their ideas develop, and at the same time, a top-down process that responds to changes in government cultural policy.

The case of the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre and subsequently the National Performing Arts Centre provides an excellent demonstration of the way that Taiwanese identity and cultural policy are coordinated. Cultural autonomy through the arm's-length principle was introduced to the NCKSCC management system in 2004, so whether and to what extent the Centre has kept its autonomy is an important question.

### **4.3.1 The Creation of the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre**

That the name of the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre retains its homage to Chiang Kai-shek is an expression of the enduring political significance of the establishing force behind the new Republic. According to Taiwanese theatre scholar Chou Yi-ton (2017: 32), during the authoritarian era the primary objective of establishing theatre venues was to serve the state and its political aims, so most were named in honour of political figures. Their buildings demonstrate the ideology and identity of their period: for example, the National Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall (1972), and the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (1987).

Wu Jing-jiyi, the Taiwanese theatre guru and Chairman of the NCKSCC from 2006 to 2007, was one of the consultants involved in planning the NCKSCC. He recalls that it was an imperative feature of national cultural policy to create a professional national performing arts centre, but in the beginning, the Government aimed to establish a 'court style' venue with a presidential VIP lounge and a grand hall (Wu, interview of 3 December 2015). This notion gave rise to the spectacular exterior architecture. Huang Pi-Twan, Artistic Director of the NCKSCC from 2010 to 2013, who was Deputy Director from 1990 to 1992 adds that 'the NCKSCC is clearly the most iconic national cultural construction of that time' when the country was focusing its construction efforts on technology, industry and the economy. It was the first time that cultural construction had been raised to the national level and that cultural policy had been taken so seriously. She comments that 'the architectural style is pure Chinese which is significant because it reflects the direction of that period when the country strongly supported traditional Chinese culture' (Huang, interview of 4 December 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author).

The NCKSCC not only displays the ambition of government cultural policy and reflects Taiwan's Chinese identity of that period, it is also an exemplar of PAC evolution (Wolff, 2017) which is closely related to changing Taiwanese identity. The Centre was originally launched as a typical high-arts PAC to attract an elite audience. But it has gradually opened itself up to embrace a wider audience and it has made moves to connect with local communities after Ju Tzong-ching, the Artistic Director from 2000 to 2004, demolished the wall that surrounded the NCKSCC and began to present a series of more widely accessible programmes (Ju, interview of 3 December 2015). It was then perceived as being more welcoming to the general public and progressed into the next stage of Wolff's series by becoming a 'nexus with multi-functions' with a new governance structure.

#### **4.3.1.1 The Evolution of the Organisation**

According to the NCKSCC (2007: 16), when the Centre was opened in 1987, it was operated as a government agency under the Ministry of Education (MOE). Even though the Council of Cultural Affairs was formed in 1981 and might have been expected to take responsibility for it, the NCKSCC remained under the MOE until 2014. Lee Huey-mei, who was Artistic Director of the Centre from 2014 to 2018 and who has worked there ever since its opening, explains that the NCKSCC was regarded as an organisation for arts education in its early period. People at that time saw the function of the performing arts in this way and that is why the Centre remained under the 'Department of Social Education' of the MOE (Lee, interview of 7 December 2015). Regarding its institutional status, the Centre was transformed into an arm's-length public corporation in 2004, although still under the supervision of the MOE.



This continued until the NCKSCC was upgraded in 2014 to become the National Performing Arts Centre under the Ministry of Culture (MOC).

The table below presents the evolution of the name, status and governance model of the NCKSCC from its inception to the present day.

**Table 4. 1 The evolution of the NCKSCC organisation**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Authority/Supervisor</b>
1987-1992	National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (National Theatre & Concert Hall)	Governmental agency (Preparatory Office for the National Theatre & Concert Hall)	Ministry of Education
1992-2004	National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (National Theatre & Concert Hall)	Governmental agency (Provisional National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre)	Ministry of Education
2004-2014	National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (National Theatre & Concert Hall)	Non-departmental public body (arm's-length)	Ministry of Education
2014-	National Performing Arts Centre (National Theatre & Concert Hall)	Non-departmental public body (arm's-length)	Ministry of Culture

Compilation from the NCKSCC historical development.

Eventually, Chiang Kai-shek's name was removed when the Centre became a component of the National Performing Arts Centre. Its official name is now the 'National Theatre & Concert Hall' of the NPAC. The new NPAC site in Taichung, central Taiwan, adds the city name as part of its official name—the 'National Taichung Theatre'—to distinguish it from the National Theatre in the capital, Taipei.

The key person in upgrading the NCKSCC as Taiwan's first non-departmental public body was Ju Tzong-ching, the Centre's Director from 2001 to 2004. Ju lobbied

for the change and saw it become reality in 2004. He remembers that for a long time, the NCSKCC was a kind of provisional organisation with a quasi-government status. Ju believed this was unhealthy and disturbing for the management team as the staff of the Centre were ‘civil servants and had to follow government regulations’. As a management regime, he felt it was inflexible, intractable and unsuitable for a performing arts centre. Ju comments that even the MOE thought that it would be better to transform the Centre to an arm’s-length organisation, and on that basis, he accepted the appointment as Director in 2001, with the task of ‘reforming the organisation’ (Ju, interview of 3 December 2015).

Thus, by 2001, both the cultural policy of the Government and people in the arts circle in Taiwan had come to a consensus about assigning the Centre autonomous status. As a result, the NCKSCC became not only the first non-departmental public body (*Hsing cheng fa ren*, 行政法人) in Taiwan, but also the original reason for the Government’s new law, the *Non-Departmental Public Bodies Act*, which was enacted in 2011 (Laws & Regulations Database of the ROC, 2016). This opened a new chapter of cultural autonomy for other future arm’s-length organisations in Taiwan.

#### **4.3.1.2 Institutional Autonomy with the Arm’s-length Principle**

Tension between the state and the arts is always an issue. National cultural policy can be seen as a form of hegemony created by the dominant culture which uses the arts, among other methods, to make its dominance appear natural to society as a whole (Miller & Yudice, 2002: 9). And in practice, the more the government subsidises the arts, the more it could be construed that there is government interference (Chong, 2010: 33). The ability of arts organisations to keep their autonomy while accepting government subsidy (intervention) is therefore a critical issue.

### **The arm's-length principle**

According to Harry Hillman-Cartrand and Claire McCaughey (1989), there are four models of the way in which democratic states operate with respect to arts and culture. A state may be *facilitator*, *patron*, *architect*, or *engineer*. In a 'patron state' the arts may be subsidised through arm's-length councils, and 'the government determines how much aggregate support to provide, but not which organisations or artists should receive support' (Hillman-Cartrand & McCaughey, 1989). The arm's-length principle is intended to avoid the issue of apparent government control and to ensure that arts organisations are independent and immune from undue government influence. As a result, the policy dynamic of the patron state tends to be 'evolutionary, responding to changing forms and styles of art as expressed by the artistic community' (ibid.).

Roger Blomgren (2012) points out that applying the arm's-length principle to public arts organisations is commonly regarded as the implementation of cultural autonomy to institutions. He explains that this places arts affairs, especially their funding, at a safe distance from politics and avoids decisions being taken directly by politicians. That task should be assigned to professionals, in other words the artists and arts organisations. In this way, when implementing cultural policy, arm's-length bodies 'should have the power to autonomously decide the content of what is to be produced' (Blomgren, 2012: 522).

Simon Mundy's opinion is that the arm's-length principle 'allows government to concentrate on overall policy, not day-to-day operations', and it also 'allows cultural organisations to demonstrate their independence—as long as the arm is really long' (Mundy, 2000: 33). When an institution is at arm's-length from government, the fact is that the 'arm' is a reality and government has not relinquished all control. The key question is what 'length' of arm is adequate to secure independence?

### **The arm's-length principle in Taiwan**

In Taiwan, from 1949, the KMT government acted in 'engineer' mode where the Government 'supports only art that meets political standards of excellence' and 'funding decisions are made by political commissars' (Hillman-Cartrand & McCaughey, 1989). When the CCA was established in 1981, the Government shifted towards the role of 'architect' by becoming involved in planning, support, and grant-giving for arts and culture through its cultural policy. In this mode, Hillman-Cartrand & McCaughey indicate that 'granting decisions concerning artists and arts organisations are generally made by bureaucrats' (ibid.). During this time, the arm's-length principle was introduced, of which the National Culture and Arts Foundation, founded in 1996, is an example.

The NCKSCC was the first arts organisation in Taiwan to follow concepts such as Japan's 'independent administrative corporations' and the UK's 'non-departmental public bodies' (Directorate-General of Personnel Administration, 2017) by operating under the arm's-length principle. Institutional autonomy, according to Geir Vestheim (2009: 37), covers the circumstances under which publicly funded or supported organisations set up their mission, make their own decisions, achieve their goals and produce their own productions, in a way that is 'immune from the arbitrary exercise of the authority by external power holders'. The aim is to encourage independence, freedom and effectiveness by distancing the organisation from government restrictions. Nevertheless, in practice, the way the arm's-length principle has been implemented at the NCKSCC has been complicated. The NCKSCC Administrative Corporation was announced in 2004 based on *National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre Establishment Law* but it was not until the *Non-Departmental Body Act* of April 2011 (Laws & Regulations Database of the ROC, 2016) was enacted that the NCKSCC's status was

officially changed. In effect, the NCKSCC was used as an experimental project to test whether or not the system would work.

### **The NCKSCC's institutional autonomy**

Ju Tzong-ching, Director of the NCKSCC between 2001 and 2004, who was the key person in forming the NCKSCC administrative corporation during his term, said in his interview that two of the main benefits of arm's-length operation are in personnel and budgeting because the NCKSCC is able to hire professional arts management staff without worrying about government budget restrictions. In Ju's opinion, the arm's-length principle enables the NCKSCC 'to bring professionalism, competitiveness, flexibility, and effectiveness to the vision to the Centre as a truly performing arts centre with the intention of freeing it from the burden of bureaucracy' (Ju, interview of 3 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author).

Table 4.2 below demonstrates the Centre's financial position and shows the origins of its income along with the proportion of box office and other service revenue, rental revenue, and government subsidy. Government subsidy has been the main element of the annual operating budget, and more than half has been from the Government since the Centre transferred to non-departmental body status in 2004. As a result, one might ask whether it is really independent of government intervention since Mundy (2000: 33) has warned 'in reality it (the arm's-length principle) rarely protects the cultural sector from the political climate. At its worst it can further complicate the means of resource delivery'.

**Table 4.2 2004-2017 NCKSCC annual operational budget with income origins**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Annual operational budget NTD (£**)</b>	<b>Box office and other service revenue NTD (£)</b>	<b>% of total income</b>	<b>Rental revenue NTD (£)</b>	<b>% of total income</b>	<b>Government subsidy NTD (£)</b>	<b>% of total income</b>
2004	431,758,000 (10,793,950)	147,130,000 (3,678,250)	34%	63,476,000 (1,586,900)	15%	216,863,000 (5,421,575)	50%
2005	1,020,630,000 (25,515,750)	167,008,000 (4,175,200)	16%	77,725,000 (1,943,125)	8%	772,176,000 (19,304,400)	76%
2006*	1,447,115,000 (36,177,875)	593,176,000 (14,829,400)	41%	77,549,000 (1,938,725)	5%	772,294,000 (19,307,350)	53%
2007	1,061,803,000 (26,545,075)	188,246,000 (47,061,500)	18%	84,842,000 (2,121,050)	8%	782,439,000 (19,560,975)	74%
2008	1,012,990,000 (25,324,750)	170,106,000 (4,252,650)	17%	84,903,000 (2,122,575)	8%	753,519,000 (18,837,975)	74%
2009	983,582,000 (24,589,550)	205,259,000 (5,131,475)	21%	95,453,000 (2,386,325)	9%	676,823,000 (16,920,575)	69%
2010	957,594,000 (23,939,850)	214,672,000 (5,366,800)	22%	99,853,000 (2,496,325)	11%	632,605,000 (15,815,125)	66%
2011	973,924,000 (24,348,100)	249,924,000 (6,248,100)	26%	110,445,000 (2,761,125)	11%	601,456,000 (15,036,400)	62%
2012	971,218,000 (24,280,450)	277,404,000 (6,935,100)	28%	103,560,000 (2,589,000)	11%	573,074,000 (14,326,850)	59%
2013	900,823,000 (22,520,575)	252,137,000 (6,303,425)	28%	112,842,000 (2,821,050)	13%	524,642,000 (13,116,050)	58%
2014	989,473,000 (24,736,825)	285,325,000 (7,133,125)	29%	114,553,000 (2,863,825)	12%	576,053,000 (14,401,325)	58%
2015	719,227,000 (17,980,675)	201,462,000 (5,036,550)	28%	99,088,000 (2,477,200)	14%	415,130,000 (10,378,250)	58%
2016	705,719,657 (17,642,991)	200,764,707 (5,019,118)	29%	106,493,821 (2,662,346)	15%	394,935,252 (9,873,381)	56%
2017	723,683,756 (18,092,094)	229,361,393 (5,734,035)	32%	112,596,981 (2,814,925)	16%	377,720,353 (9,443,009)	52%

\* In 2006 the NCKSCC presented the musical *The Phantom of the Opera*, which substantially increased the total box office income.

\*\* Exchange rate: £ 1= NTD 40.

Source: own compilation from the NCKSCC annual report 2004-2017.

According to the founding legislation of *National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre Establishment Law*, the Centre has a Board of Directors consisting of between eleven and fifteen members, who appoint the Artistic Director, approve the work policy, discuss operational plans, objectives and important regulations, and raise funds. The Artistic Director manages all the affairs of the Centre and has responsibility for the preparation of annual plans. Members of the Board of Directors are selected and recommended by the Ministry of Education (MOE) but appointed by the Premier of the Executive Yuan. Apart from scholars, experts in the performing arts, education and cultural academics, and professional operators and managers, who comprise the majority of the Board, the Government appoints three of its own representatives as Board members. The number of Board members in each of the first three categories is no more than four (MOE, 2016). By convention, between 2004 and 2014, the three government representatives were the Deputy Minister of the MOE, the Minister without Portfolio (culture and education) and the Minister of the CCA (2004-2012; from 2013 to 2014, the Deputy Minister MOC sat on the Board).

After upgrading to the NPAC in 2014, with the new *Act for Establishment of National Performing Arts Centre*, the seat of the Minister without Portfolio was changed to the Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This demonstrates the intention of the Government to make a connection between government policies (diplomatic as well as cultural and educational) and the Centre, so it made sense to engage Ministers of relevant Departments to represent their policies. Nevertheless, appointment of Board members by the Government potentially compromises the arm's-length principle and there is a need to investigate whether there has been any influence from government on the NCKSCC, even though it is supposedly an independent organisation.

From 2004 to 2017, the list of Chairmen and Artistic Directors can be seen in Table 4.3. Although their backgrounds range from scholars and academics to artists and managers, as many as four former Ministers of the CCA appear on the list, emphasising the close connection between the CCA/MOC and the NCKSCC, even though it was not the supervisory Ministry until 2014.

**Table 4.3 Board Chairmen and Artistic Directors of the NCKSCC (2004-2017)**

(Individuals interviewed in 2015 and 2018 are marked \*)

Chairman	Tenure	Background	Note	Artistic Director	Tenure	Background	Note
Chiu Kun-liang	March 2004~ April 2006	Scholar, President, Taipei National University of Arts	Former Minister, CCA (May 2006~ May 2007)	Ju Tzng-ching*	March 2004~ August 2004	Percussionist President, Taipei National University of Arts	Current Chairman, NPAC
				Ping Heng*	September 2004~ February 2007	Dance Professional	
Wu Jing-jyi*	April 2006~ February 2007	Scholar	Theatre guru, Government Consultant				
Tchen Yu-chiou*	March 2007~ February 2010	Pianist	Former Minister, CCA (May 2000~ May 2004) The Head of Evaluation Committee (2004-2006)	Yang Chi-wen*	April 2007~ January 2008	Scholar, Theatre Designer, President, Taipei National University of Arts	
				Liu Chiung-shu*	May 2008~ February 2010	Pianist, Scholar	



Kuo Wei-fan*	March 2010~ February 2013	President, National Taiwan Normal University	Former Minister, CCA (July 1988~ February 1993)	Huang Pi-twan*	March 2010~ February 2013	President, Tainan National University of Arts	Former Minister, CCA (May 2008~ November 2009)
Ju Tzong-ching*	March 2013~ March 2014	Percussionist President, Taipei National University of Arts	Former Artistic Director, NCKSCC, Current Chairman, NPAC	Ping Heng*	March 2013~ July 2014	Dance Professional	
				Lee Huey-mei*	July 2014~ March 2014	Programmer	
Chen Kuo-tzu	April 2014~ January 2017	Lawyer	Former CEO of the NCAF	Lee Huey-mei*	April 2014 ~ April 2018	Programmer	Upgrade to the NPAC

Source: own compilation from the NCKSCC historical development.

Concerning the Centre's autonomy, during interviews, everyone claimed that there has never been intervention from the Government in the work of the NCKSCC, and that they all had power to take decisions for the NCKSCC, according to their duties. All of the Chairmen and Artistic Directors interviewed see the Centre's autonomy as a professional independent performing arts centre as a very precious asset.

Tchen Yu-chiou, NCKSCC Chairwoman (2007-2010), asserts that she did not feel that anyone from the Government gave indications to the Board on how to operate the Centre during her term. In her opinion, 'if the Artistic Director has a point of view and knows what he or she wants to achieve, the Government would not intervene' (Tchen, interview of 27 November 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author). Kuo Wei-fan, Tchen's successor as NCKSCC Chairman (2010-2013), agrees with that and also stresses that when the NCKSCC was under the MOE, the main connection

between it and the Ministry concerned budgeting rather than the Centre's operation (Kuo, interview of 28 June 2018). In the opinion of Ju Tzong-ching, the first Artistic Director (2004) of the NCKSCC, politicians hardly influenced the operation of the NCKSCC. With the agreement of the MOE, he proposed the Centre's goals and objectives himself after much discussion and consultation with the performing arts realm. 'It is autonomous and self-regulating, and the responsibility for its activities is vested in the Artistic Directors' (Ju, interview of 3 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author). Liu Chiung-shu, another former Artistic Director (2008-2010), adds that the Centre essentially had its own objectives, such as 'advance local development' and 'enhance international association', she carries on:

Fundamentally, the Centre set up its own mission with the Board. As far as changes to the political party in government were concerned, I didn't feel any impact. In 2008, the KMT party returned to government, but the Centre still kept its own direction with regular programming pace without intervention. (Liu, interview of 25 May 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

In terms of the relationship with the supervisory ministry, most Artistic Directors, such as Ping Heng, (2004-2007) and Yang Chi-wen, (2007-2008) pointed out that the Centre's supervisory ministry was the MOE and the budget of the Centre only occupied a tiny percentage of the whole budget of the MOE. The MOE therefore paid more attention to the larger parts of its remit and 'was quite supportive in endorsing the Centre's plans most of time' (Ping, interview of 29 November 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author) and 'was happy to respect the artistic professionalism of the Centre's team allowing it to get on with its work without interference' (Yang, interview of 14 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author). Thus, the Centre is autonomous and independent from the Ministries, although Ju Tzong-ching, Artistic Director from 2001 to 2004, emphasises that in order to make sure the administration

ran smoothly, ‘good collaboration with the MOE and other government departments is crucial’ (Ju, interview of 3 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author).

### **The Board, the Evaluation Committee and KPIs**

The Board plays a prominent role in the relationship between the Government and the NCKSCC. Because the Centre is an arm’s-length organisation, the MOE and MOC are not legally in a position to issue instructions to the Centre, but the Board, standing between the Ministry and the Centre, makes sure that the Ministry’s views are taken into account. The Board has authority over the Centre’s operation and management.

Ju Tzong-ching explains:

Board members are appointed by the Government and are therefore the Government’s representatives to some degree. But as such, they have to be careful not to be denounced for meddling in the Centre’s work, so the arm’s-length principle was introduced to demonstrate that the Government is in touch with the Centre and yet stands at a distance from it. The Board’s task is to oversee the direction of the Centre while being conscious of government cultural policy. (Ju, interview of 3 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author)

That is to say, the Government has not so far been prescriptive in telling the Centre what to do, and relies on the individuals it has appointed to the Board, along with the Artistic Director, to manage the Centre’s affairs in such a way that its objectives and annual activities follow the Government policy aspirations in general terms.

However, one issue raised its head at the NCKSCC when it became a non-departmental public body in 2004. After just six months, the first Artistic Director, Ju Tzong-ching, who was the key person in achieving this institutional change, resigned and Ping Heng became his successor. Ju did not explain at the interview why he resigned so quickly, but Ping spoke about how difficult and frustrating it was to deal with the newly instituted Board and the Evaluation Committee, an assessment

mechanism imposed by the MOE. Ping explained that most of the experts and professionals on both the Board and the MOE's Evaluation Committee were keen to deliver their own ideas of how the NCKSCC should be properly managed and in doing so they exceeded the scope of their duties by becoming involved in management operations and programming. This was frustrating for the NCKSCC management team who spent much time responding to Board members' requests. She recalls:

It seems to me that there was no problem with the Ministry, but the problem was with individual members of the Board or the Evaluation Committee who wanted to influence the way the NCKSCC was administered. (Ping, interview of 29 November 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Ping admits that this is probably inevitable when a new institution is set up, and it was more than a decade before both the Board and the Evaluation Committee properly acknowledged their responsibilities.

Interestingly, it seems that conflicts with the Board in the early period seldom arose through those Board members who were government representatives; it was the independent members who gave trouble. Another former Artistic Director (2007-2008), Yang Chi-wen remembers that the Board members from the MOE were normally very humble in claiming that they were not performing arts professionals and would respect the experts. Yang recalls that they came to Board meetings because they were obliged to do so. The Board member representing the CCA was supposed to be the Minister, but he or she was often too busy to attend in person and sent a substitute to the meeting. This meant that the delegates were normally silent in the meetings, merely taking notes so they could report back to the CCA. Yang further observes that:

All of the Board members, and especially those from the Government, tended to be very careful what they said at meetings in case the press got to hear about their comments. They also kept emphasising that they had to follow the regulations of arm's-length principle. So basically, the Centre is quite

autonomous and independent from other institutions. (Yang, interview of 14 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Liu Chiung-shu, former Artistic Director (2008-2010), agrees that at Board meetings during her term, the members who served as government representatives did not normally express opinions, but the rest often gave advice according to their professional management and finance backgrounds. However, ‘neither paid much attention to the NCKSCC’s programming’ (Liu, interview of 25 May 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author). Confirming this, Wang Wei-ling, the Executive Secretary of the Board (2014-2016), comments that the MOC did not really get involved with the management of the Centre as they were conscious that they have to follow the arm’s-length principle. That is to say, the MOC did not ask the Centre to pursue the Ministry’s cultural policy. Instead, they would announce that some particular cultural policies would be supported by extra funding and grants and in this way, they would encourage rather than enforce (Wang, interview of 9 June 2018). Clearly, the Government is very circumspect with respect to their role on the Board and very cautious about how the public views government action there.

Ping Heng, the Artistic Director (2004-2007) also reveals that, when the Centre was instituted as an arm’s-length organisation, ‘Key Performance Indicators’ (KPIs) were introduced by the Evaluation Committee, based on the goals approved by the MOE. The KPI figures related to income, box office, the number of performances, the size of audiences and so on. The most difficult part was the initial bargaining over setting the target numbers with the MOE’s Evaluation Committee. (Ping, interview of 29 November 2015). Corroborating this, Wang Yun-yu, Executive Secretary of the Board (2004-2014) adds that, in the beginning, no one actually knew how to set up the system, and as a result, the content of the evaluation scheme and the KPI target figures were proposed by the Centre itself, and then the Committee revised them based on the

Centre's original plan (Wang, interview of 14 June 2018). From this it is clear that the MOE wanted to agree numerical KPIs with which to assess the Centre's performance across a range of goals, so that the results could be used in planning the annual budget and subsidies for the next year. However, it also exposes the weakness of assessing cultural performance in numerical terms, thereby potentially missing the intention of the cultural policy.

To conclude, there is constant concern to maintain institutional autonomy without government intervention. Chairmen and Artistic Directors of the NCKSCC have been clear that there has been no direct government interference in the work of the Centre. This might give the impression that the Centre is completely autonomous and that government has no part to play in deciding what happens there. However, the Board and the Ministry's Evaluation Committee play influential roles in the Centre's operation and any conflict or influences are likely to come from them, as several of the NCKSCC's Artistic Directors have mentioned. It depends on who is on the Board and, as the Centre's former Chairman (2006-2007) Wu Jing-jyi points out, when the ruling party of the Government changes, the core policies of the Government also change. This naturally affects the NCKSCC at least in an indirect way. Wu explains:

All the directors of the Board are appointed by the Government, which pays attention to the balance of cultural diversity and ethnic backgrounds. The Government doesn't intervene in the NCKSCC's operation, but the composition of the Board reflects the political and social atmosphere, which therefore has a clearly moderating influence. (Wu, interview of 3 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author)

According to Table 4.3, the overlapping membership between the CCA, NCAF, arts universities and the Centre is a sign that the circle of arts and culture professionals in Taiwan is a rather small 'old boy's network'. There is close personal contact within that sphere with the result that everybody on the Board, or the Evaluation Committee

and the senior staff at the Centre are likely to know one another well. They are all well aware of government intentions and are able to act sensitively with respect to the political situation. Wang Wen-yi, the first Artistic Director of the National Taichung Theatre (2014-2018), explains that there are many occasions, events or meetings that give opportunities to communicate with Ministers or government officials, so cultural issues were frequently discussed. In this situation the Ministers would ‘unofficially’ appraise the Centre’s goals and update the Centre on what kind of support the Ministry would offer (Wang, interview of 5 July 2018). What is more, since the Centre’s own objectives had been framed to be compatible with cultural policy, it was not difficult to ensure that its activities remained acceptable to government.

It follows that if Artistic Directors claim that they are independent, they must also take responsibility for what happens at the Centre. Thus, accountability becomes their main concern. The Centre is allocated grant-in-aid each year by the Government, and the Ministers of the MOE and then the MOC are in turn themselves accountable to Taiwan’s parliament (the Legislative Yuan) for the way in which the money is spent. The MOE/MOC’s activities are related to cultural policy which sets out its objectives and forms the basis for the distribution of the money that the Executive Yuan has allocated. In order to demonstrate how the MOE/MOC is accounting for the money it has spent, it sets its sponsored bodies a series of KPIs via the Evaluation Committee, and recipients of MOE/MOC finance are expected to achieve the targets they have been set.

So, is the NCKSCC autonomous? Given that it has to account for the money it has been allocated each year, and given that such money is allocated on the understanding that certain KPI targets are met, the Centre is clearly not entirely autonomous. Its activities are dictated within certain limits by its Ministry, as set out in the Ministry’s policy. Nevertheless, within those limits, according to the comments

by NCKSCC's Artistic Directors referred to above, the Centres are insistent that the Ministry does not interfere in their work.

#### **4.3.1.3 The Programming Process**

Programming for a mixed-programme organisation is a process involving a series of choices: selecting work for the proper audience; deciding programme types and frequencies; and setting ticket prices for the programmes (Pick & Anderton, 1996: 89).

##### **Programming approaches, factors and types**

Hilppa Sorjonen (2011) introduces three different programming approaches: creativity-based, resource-based and mission-based, relating to research on market orientation in arts organisations. She explains that 'in the creativity-based approach, the repertoire is an artwork created by one person based on a creative planning process' whereas 'in the resource-based approach, programming is guided by the available resource, both tangible and intangible', and 'in the mission-based approach, the organisation is guided by its mission' (Sorjonen, 2011: 9). The result is:

There is a challenge for arts organisations to take customer needs into account in programming while at the same time responding to the needs of artists and media, not to mention to the need of the artistic director. This makes programming even more challenging (Sorjonen, 2011: 16).

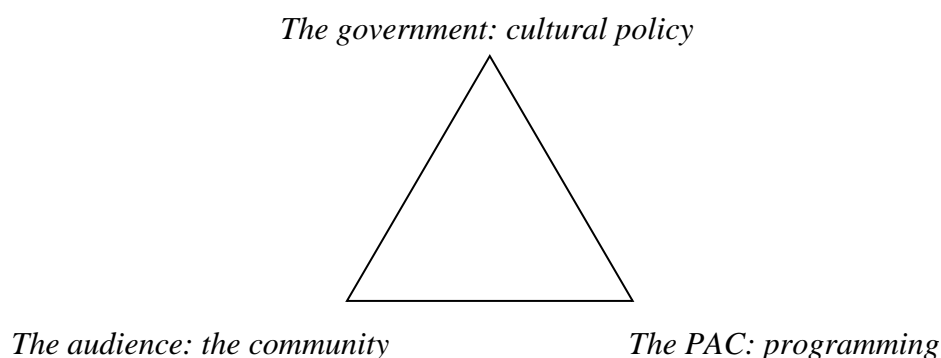
This implies that various factors influence a PAC's programming, and also that the programming department is the core team of a PAC.

When a PAC is a state or arm's-length institution, the factors that affect its programming are likely to include the government's cultural policy. A PAC's mission, objectives and vision, especially a state PAC, indicates its programming direction, which through its choices creates an identity for the house in its taste, style and trends.



It also presents a collective identity through its artists and audience. In this way, it is possible for a PAC not only to establish its own character, but also to shape the cultural environment within the area and community in which it is located. Figure 4.1 illustrates the relationship of three roles of a PAC. Each point of the triangle in this model interacts with the other two in determining the formulation of the programmes.

**Figure 4.1 Triangular interactive relationship of a PAC**



Source: own compilation.

As a national performing art centre with more than 50% of its income provided by the Government, the NCKSCC not only has to consider all these factors but it also needs to be aware of its social responsibility when creating its programmes. At the same time, the Government operates, in effect, as an audience in its own right by setting KPIs that are related to its cultural policy and instruct specific lines of programming for their achievement. This must also influence programming and is an example of Sorjonen's 'mission-based' programming approach.

In terms of a PAC's performance, the triangle model of influences presented above indicates the relationship between Tony Micocci's (2017: 63) three methods of generating programmes: produce, present and rent<sup>21</sup>. A PAC can create its own

<sup>21</sup> Tony Micocci defines three ways in which PAC programmers provide shows for their audiences: '(1) they *produce* new shows for their stage; (2) they *present* shows produced by outside entities, based locally or elsewhere; (3) they *rent* their stages to third-party producers

productions by commissioning or collaborating with artists or companies and, if it has its own resident companies, it can also generate productions through them. Equally, a PAC may present shows through inviting or buying-in productions or repertoire from outside bodies. Rental, on the other hand, implies letting out the PAC as a space for outside artists or companies to show their own work. In this case, the PAC has little influence over the creative component of the shows that appear at its premises beyond selecting artists whose work it trusts and holding a potential veto over what is shown. These are not always mutually exclusive, there may be a degree of cross-over between the modes Mococchi (2017: 64-65) illustrates the hybrid and varied methods of collaboration applied to those three programme types. This programming operating model is also used by the NCKSCC.

### **Programming at the NCKSCC**

In order to understand the programming process of the NCKSCC Li Chia-chi and Huang Pen-ting, two former Programme Managers, were interviewed. Li (interviewed on 27 June 2018) was in post from 2012 to 2014 while Huang (interviewed on 3 July 2018) was in post from 2014 to 2016. For each calendar year, there are a maximum of 52 week-long programme slots to fill at the National Theatre (including the Grand Theatre and the Experimental Theatre) and there are up to 365 daily slots to fill at the National Concert Hall (including the main Concert Hall and the Recital Hall). There has been a Department in charge of programming since the Centre was launched.

According to Liu Feng-shueh, the NCKSCC's Director from 1988 to 1990, there was at one time a proposal to establish the NCKSCC's own performing companies, such as a symphony orchestra, a choir, a theatre and a dance company, but this proposal

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and presenters' (2017: 63). These three core ways can be expanded with variations as (a) hybrid producing: *co-producing, commissioning or co-commissioning*; (b) hybrid presenting: *co-presenting, block booking, opportunity booking*; (c) renting variations: *resident company rental relationships, exclusive programming relationships* (2017: 64-65).

only resulted in a single resident company, the National Symphony Orchestra (Liu, interview of 27 November 2015). Lee Huey-mei, the Artistic Director between 2014 and 2018, and who has worked at the Centre ever since it opened, points out that the NCKSCC did not originally consider itself to be a venue open for rent. However, the reality was that the Centre didn't have the capacity to fill its calendar with productions because of insufficient budget. She further explains that during the early years, the arts environment in Taiwan was very vigorous and professional venues were in high demand. As a result, the Centre was opened up to rental in the second year after its launch (Lee, interview of 7 December 2015).

Thus since 1988, the venues have been open to outside applicants and there is a Rental Programming Committee that operates the NCKSCC's *Management Regulations for Programme Quality* to evaluate the quality of proposed rental programmes and to make sure they are suitable for presentation. Liu Feng-shueh, Director from 1988 to 1990, who introduced regulated rental programmes during her term of office, was clear that the supply of venues cannot meet the demand for them. She also explained that in practice, the rental fee charged does not cover the costs to the Centre of mounting programmes that are brought in and this means that the Government indirectly subsidises the private presenters. In Liu's view, this is not a free market mechanism, but rather a system that has been selected by the Centre itself in which the Artistic Director is in a position to decide the types of rental programmes to be staged and to select artistic companies when constructing a balanced annual programme (Liu, interview of 27 November 2015).

The proportion of rental to the Centre's own programmes has varied from time to time during the regime of different Directors. Liu claims that the percentage of rental programmes is decided by the Director who considers all the aspects and conditions (Liu, interview of 27 November 2015). Ju Tzong-ching, another former Director

(2001-2004), who is the current Chairman of the NPAC, comments that when he was appointed to his post by the MOE, the NCKSCC was at the lowest ebb of its history in terms of programming. Only 17% of the programmes staged there were created by the Centre and all the rest were brought in by companies who rented the venues. However, looking on the positive side, he regarded this as a good time to begin a new regime since the political climate had been newly energised in 2000 with the first change in government from the KMT to DPP, and the cultural environment was changing towards the creation of a Taiwanese identity. With support from the MOE as well as the artistic community, he took decisive action and increased the proportion of the Centre's own programmes to more than 30% and had a target of 50%, although this would have required a larger budget from the MOE (Ju, interview of 3 December 2015).

Table 4.4 shows the annual number of performances given and the number of audience members attending the performances, along with the ratio of the Centre's own programmes and their box office income against rental programmes and rental income from 2004 to 2017. The Centre charges the venue rental fee from the private presenters who receive their own box office income from their programmes. Approximately two thirds of the NCKSCC's performances were rental. Although both proportions of box office income from the Centre's own programmes and venue rental income are relatively lower (which shows the main income of the Centre is from the Government), the proportion of income from venue rental is only half, or even less than half, of the box office income from the Centre's own programmes. This is why the rental charged does not reflect the actual cost of hosting rented shows, and why the Government indirectly subsidises them.

**Table 4.4 The annual total of performances and audience at the NCKSCC (2004-2017)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of performances</b>	<b>No. of audience</b>	<b>No. of produced &amp; presented performances (% of total performances)</b>	<b>Box office income of produced &amp; presented performances (% of total income)</b>	<b>No. of rental performances (% of total performances)</b>	<b>Rental income (% of total income)</b>
2004	965	633,068	322 (33%)	34%	643 (67%)	15%
2005	996	624,131	307 (31%)	16%	689 (69%)	8%
2006	1022	700,668	383 (37%)	41%	639 (63%)	5%
2007	964	623,823	229 (24%)	18%	727 (76%)	8%
2008	979	625,974	286 (29%)	17%	693 (71%)	8%
2009	968	642,576	279 (29%)	21%	689 (71%)	9%
2010	981	653,856	260 (27%)	22%	721 (73%)	11%
2011	1,030	688,427	265 (26%)	26%	765 (74%)	11%
2012	1,052	675,891	254 (24%)	28%	798 (76%)	11%
2013	1,072	689,161	242 (24%)	28%	830 (76%)	13%
2014	1,093	710,952	264 (24%)	29%	829 (76%)	12%
2015	823	518,162	233(28%)	28%	595 (72%)	14%
2016	861	562,602	174 (20%)	29%	687 (80%)	15%
2017	1,049	682,676	276 (26%)	32%	773 (74%)	16%

Source: own compilation from the NCKSCC annual report 2004-2017.

Although one could argue that the NCKSCC's rental programmes are in some sense 'programmed' by the Centre, the Centre's own programmes are the essence of the NCKSCC's offer which represents its character, and that is the main focus of this thesis. Following Mocicci's (2017) programme classification, the NCKSCC's own programmes cover those produced and presented by the Centre. Also, due to various circumstances, there are not only produced/co-produced programmes, but also commissioned/co-commissioned programmes under the 'produce' category as well as purely invited or co-presented programmes under the 'present' category. Any of these programmes are commonly planned at least two years ahead and they take priority for

each venue, whereas rental programmes are selected only one year ahead, if and when space is free. The Programming Department, working to the Director collects and provides programme materials, and its executive team, under the Artistic Director is responsible for preparing the programmes which are submitted to the Board for approval.

According to Huang Pen-ting, the NCKSCC's Programme Manager from 2014 to 2016, (interview of 3 July 2018), before detailed programming begins, the Centre has normally made plans for the future of different lengths: long-term (5 years), mid-term (3 years) and short-term (annual) plans which are submitted to both the Ministry and the Board. These plans commonly outline broad directions, such as 'consolidate a Taiwanese arts environment', 'promote international exchange', 'create classics' and 'build accessibility for diversity'. After setting down the goals above, every department at the NCKSCC then has to prepare detailed plans showing how those goals would be achieved. For the Programming Department, this means designing a plan of programmes for at least two years in advance, following the goals set and addressing any comments offered. For example, according to Huang Pen-ting, in the overview of the annual programmes from 2010 to 2015, the aims of the Programming Department were:

1. Introduce further outstanding international programmes and further promote talented Taiwanese programmes to expand the horizon of Taiwanese audiences.
2. Strengthen international and cross-border collaborations.
3. Maintain the focus on Taiwanese artists by offering comprehensive support and assistance.
4. Explore new Taiwanese talent, encouraging new productions, and assisting their international promotion.

(Huang, interview of 3 July 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

The Programming Department proposes its detailed programme to the Artistic Director who, after discussion, submits it to the Programming Committee. The Board is then asked to comment on the overall direction of the programme. According to Li Chia-chi, the NCKSCC's Programme Manager from 2012 to 2014, (interview of 27 June 2018), since this programme plan is formulated according to the goals approved by the Board, the detailed programme is normally accepted without further discussion because the Board is mainly concerned with major issues such as strategic planning and budgets. Although government representatives sit on the Board, in practice they have played little part in meetings and have often been represented by deputies. This may be because of time pressures but perhaps also because they perceive cultural affairs to be of lower priority than other responsibilities in their portfolio. The time scale of programming is dictated by the need to generate contracts with artists 18 months or 2 years in advance, so the programming timetable is regular, slow, done in yearly blocks and long in advance of actual performances. In other words, the mechanism of programming is stable, continuing, and longstanding.

Lee Huey-mei (interview of 7 December 2015) comments that during her 30 years' experience at the NCKSCC, overall shifts in programming, followed the tastes and preferences of different Directors but also changes in society in general. As Micocci (2019:81-82) suggests, 'programming involves *both* wise choices in show selection *and* contextualisation of the performance as an appealing educational and lifestyle experience for the patron'. The 'patron' in the case of the NCKSCC is the sponsoring government, but also the public audience.

#### **4.3.1.4 The Correlation between Programming and Cultural Policy**

This section concentrates on the correlation between the NCKSCC's system of programming and government cultural policy to see whether the reality of programming remains autonomous and immune from undue government influence.

Government policy with respect to Taiwan's cultural life is expressed in general terms without specifying details of implementation (see Chapter 3 above). Policy makers may seek specialist advice when they set national policies because they are politicians and not artists and are unlikely to have experience of arts programming, or even to be aware of the potential activities that might be commissioned in order to fulfil their policy aims. According to Lin Fang-Yi, a former official of the Ministry of Culture:

Officials in the MOC regard themselves as professional civil servants and rely on professional arts experts to offer ideas and take decisions when making detailed policy under the Ministry of Culture's mission. Such things are left to artistic directors whose task is to provide a mechanism by which arts policies can be realised. Thus, policies are set in general terms without reference to specific activities. (Lin, interview of 8 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

The influence of politicians on the development of the performing arts in Taiwan is, in the main, to provide finance and to oversee the provision of suitable venues in which their policy aims can be brought about. This means that the development of the performing arts in Taiwan has largely been the result of activity by artists and arts administrators under the umbrella of government policy, rather than being deliberate action by policy makers themselves.



### **The NCKSCC as a government agency**

Before the NCKSCC was made an arm's-length non-departmental public body in 2004, it was under the administration of the Ministry of Education and had no direct relationship with the Council for Cultural Affairs. All the Directors still living who were interviewed for this thesis (Liu Feng-shueh (1988-1990), Hu Yao-heng (1992-1993), and Ju Tzong-ching (2001-2004)) insisted that while the NCKSCC was under the MOE they were the decision makers on programming with no intervention from the Government

Liu Feng-shueh, believes that the MOE never gave orders or instructions during her term, because the NCKSCC's high reputation with the public meant that it could be left to its own devices without interference. On the other hand, the CCA, although it had no direct administrative relationship with the NCKSCC, had a substantial budget for presenting programmes and needed a professional arts management team and, most importantly, a venue. Because the annual budget from the MOE mainly covered building maintenance, equipment, and management expenses (about £4,000,000 per year in 1988-1990) not enough remained for presenting programmes. The best course of action was therefore to co-present programmes in collaboration with the CCA. According to Liu, 'the co-presented programmes needed to be approved by both sides, but the MOE had no objection to this type of collaboration' (Liu, interview of 27 November 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author). Hu Yao-heng, Liu's successor as NCKSCC Director, says that once a Director was appointed, the MOE gave its full trust and authority, but the CCA, because they were not experts in the performing arts, often asked the professional opinion of the NCKSCC's Directors if it needed to present works to fulfil its cultural policy, and that is why the NCKSCC and CCA co-presented programmes. According to Hu, this kind of collaboration meant that it saved a large amount of money and allowed the Centre to present more

programmes that took into account the interest of the audience because box office income is critical (Hu, interview of 25 May 2018).

Lee Huey-mei, the Centre's Artistic Director from 2014 to 2018, says that the MOE naturally gave an educational slant to its thinking about policies and its interpretation of the three main directions: 'art education extension', 'social education supplement' and 'international exchange encouragement' that were set up at the Centre's launch (interview of 7 December 2015). Nevertheless, having begun work at the Centre from its opening:

Ever since I started to work there, the 'three directions' already existed. Over the years, we have set up the Centre's mission, goals and objectives according to these three directions, even if they appeared in different wording. Those directions have been present consistently. (Lee, interview of 7 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author)

The MOE has therefore consistently preferred the Centre to create its own policies and then to refer them back to the MOE, within the very broad framework that stresses the link between education and the arts and the need for international exchange.

Although the CCA was given responsibility for implementing national cultural policy at its foundation in 1981, there is a difficulty in considering the correlation between its policies and the NCKSCC because the NCKSCC was under the MOE rather than the CCA between 1987 and 2014. As a result, the CCA did not at that time have the political power to oversee the NCKSCC's work on cultural policy implementation, even though it was nominally in charge of performing arts affairs. On appointment, CCA Ministers regularly prepare a new policy statement, but the evidence is that the NCKSCC carried on with its existing plans without apparently making changes in line with any new cultural policy statements. Thus, although there have been rapid changes of CCA Minister, the NCKSCC's goals have remained largely unchanging. Naturally, the NCKSCC was delighted to collaborate with the

CCA if it meant that the Centre could save money and also diversify its programmes. Nevertheless, according to Hu Yao-heng, 'it was the Centre's right to decide if it was appropriate to collaborate with the CCA' (interview of 25 May 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author), and Liu Feng-shueh emphasises that 'the CCA had many policies, but the Centre also had its own intentions and its own momentum. It all depends whether they could coordinate with our situation' (interview of 27 November 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author).

### **After becoming an arm's-length organisation**

The year 2004 was a crucial point in the NCKSCC's development because it was then set up as a non-departmental public body with an arm's-length relationship with the MOE. Because of this, as pointed out above, the NCKSCC's Artistic Directors themselves took on responsibility for planning decisions and their background, political orientation and artistic preferences shaped the programming direction for the Centre. Nevertheless, Lee Huey-mei also points out 'these people are also well aware of, and sensitive to the political climate of the day, as well as the social milieu in which the Centre operated' (Lee, interview of 7 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author). This indicates the subtle and nuanced situation for the Centre's autonomy as discussed in Section 4.3.1.2 above.

From 2004, the NCKSCC became more independent and autonomous under its newly established Board which played a crucial role in the Centre's programming. Wang Yun-yu, Executive Secretary of the Board (2004-2014) reveals that when the Centre's programming plan was proposed to the Board, the Artistic Director was asked to convince the Board members that the plan connected to the core mission of the Centre. Each Artistic Director would have different views and preferences which

needed their own form of words to tell the story and make connections with the Centre's objectives. However, over the years, Wang recalls:

The main goals of the Centre have been remarkably consistent, and it seems that these main goals can always apply to the national cultural policy whether the Ministers of the CCA/MOC changed frequently or not because national cultural policies are worded so widely; this is not hard to do. (Wang, interview of 14 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

That is to say, the direction of cultural policy has remained essentially the same and is widely recognised. The NCKSCC's annual aims are a guide to the direction of its programming and, according to Programme Manager, Huang Pen-ting, since 2005, they have been remarkably consistent:

1. To produce good quality programmes sourced in Taiwan.
2. To represent the world outside Taiwan by empowering an international performing arts platform.
3. To build up the reputation of the NCKSCC's production brand.
4. To develop the precinct of National Theatre & Concert Hall into an area where everyone can enjoy the arts.

(Huang, interview of 3 July 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

The only change has been the addition in 2011 of a fifth goal 'To pass on experiences gained in the NCKSCC's work to other upcoming performing arts centres' (*ibid.*). This addition was made at the time when the new NPAC complexes were in planning. These aims are very similar to those set out in the Government cultural policy (see Chapter 3) and would not be difficult to be satisfied by the detailed projects or programmes of the Centre's programming department. Nor would it be difficult to make connections with the national cultural policy through carefully chosen words.

Yet former Artistic Director (2007-2008) Yang Chi-wen argues that this similarity is the result of both the Ministry and the Centre following a universal path, rather than the Centre following the Ministry's direction. He explains:

National cultural policy and the NCKSCC's policy are analogous because they are both focused on 'general' and 'positive' approaches. The result is that they follow a similar direction by, for example, encouraging international exchange and supporting Taiwanese companies and artists. But the policies are so generally vague and non-specific that it is hard to say that the NCKSCC is affected by national cultural policy. (Yang, interview of 14 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Huang Pi-twan, another NCKSCC Artistic Director (2010-2013) who was also Minister of the CCA (2008-2009) again emphasises that the process of programming at the NCKSCC is based on the mission and goals of the Centre, but does not have much to do with national cultural policy. If it sometimes appears that programmes follow government cultural policy that is because the NCKSCC spontaneously realises or senses the needs of society which have also given rise to the current cultural policy (Huang, interview of 12 December 2015). In other words, programming happens in parallel with the formulation of national cultural policy rather than following it.

The main thrust of national policy as set by the President of the country is very comprehensive with non-specific aspirations such as 'promoting arts from a Taiwanese perspective'. All ministries, as the second level in the Government hierarchy, interpret the President's top-level priority by setting policies for their own area of responsibility, but they tend to remain equally non-specific and general in nature. So, for the CCA/MOC, policy priorities would be, for example, 'support Taiwanese companies' or 'develop young Taiwanese artistic talents' which would correspond to the three main directions set by the MOE, and then these were dovetailed into the objectives of the NCKSCC.

This kind of relationship between the NCKSCC and national cultural policy carried on even after 2004 when the Board of the Centre was brought into being and the Minister of the CCA officially became one of the Board Directors, representing the Government. All the Chairmen or Artistic Directors spoken to in the interviews

listed in Table 4.3 in section 4.3.1.2 claimed that there has never been specific policy instructions from the Government dictating how the NCKSCC should work. However, both the Artistic Director and the Board of the NCKSCC need to be sufficiently sensitive to the reality of government policies and ambitions that when the Centre's objectives and programmes are created and agreed they are attuned to government policy in a general rather than in any specific way.

### **The Programme Managers' views**

Turning to a different angle to investigate this issue, two of the NCKSCC's Programme Managers: Li Chia-chi, Programme Manager (2012-2014) and Huang Pen-ting, Programme Manager (2014-2016) have offered their personal perspective concerning programming. Li emphasises that as Programme Manager, what he needs to keep in mind are the goals and objectives of the Centre, rather than government cultural policy'. Li continues:

The factors that influence programming decisions are the artistic preferences and professional judgement of the Artistic Director, with the assistance of the Programme Manager, rather than the concerns of cultural policy. And of course, the Programme Manager also has preferences and judgement. Consistently, the core of our programming is always the quality and creativity of the programmes themselves. (Li, interview of 27 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Li's successor, Huang Pen-ting, agrees and adds that as the NCKSCC was the only national PAC when she was Programme Manager, the public expected its programmes to represent every aspect of Taiwanese society. As a result, the Centre's programmes tended to be diverse and comprehensive. However, 'this is an approach that the Centre has set for itself because the Artistic Director and the programming team are sensitive to public opinion. It is not a government requirement' (Huang, interview of 3 July 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author).

To summarise the interviews, there is no evidence of government interference with the NCKSCC's programming. However, there is a sophisticated collaborative relationship in presenting programmes and an implicit influence from the Government's cultural policy that takes two forms. In the first place the Government has broad policy directives which the NCKSCC is obliged to follow, but there is in addition a more subtle consequence that is exerted by Ministers in conversation behind the scenes rather than by formal and public direct orders.

The MOE, the Government department that for many years had authority over the NCKSCC, behaved like a messenger by communicating policy based on the current laws, but it involved itself very little with the NCKSCC's operations, especially programming, as long as conditions remained stable and ran safely. The MOC has only been the supervisory authority since 2014 but it has scrupulously abided by the arm's-length principle and there is no reason to doubt that it will continue to do so in the future. Wu Jing-jyi, the Chairman (2006-2007) and consultant to many governmental cultural agencies, emphasises that national cultural policy makers would not in practice have the knowledge to spell out all the details of policy implementation because that is the task of the NCKSCC. Wu stresses:

It is the responsibility of the Artistic Director and programming team to comply with the basic elements of the cultural policy, which they do implicitly and naturally. Decisions about what kind of programmes and events should be presented at the NCKSCC are the responsibility of NCKSCC itself. (Wu, interview of 3 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Interestingly, the term of office of the Centre's Board members and of the Artistic Director ends one or two years after Taiwan's presidential election, which takes place every four years. This means that there is an overlap between the arrival of a new government and the final years of the NCKSCC's top level management team. For

example, in 2008 the Government was KMT, but the NCKSCC management had been appointed by the previous DPP government. And in 2016 the Government was DPP but the NPAC management was appointed by the previous KMT administration.

Nevertheless, Liu Chiung-shu, NCKSCC Artistic Director (2008-2010), observes that mutual respect between governments and the NCKSCC/NPAC top management means that the programmes keep running as they were planned. There is general agreement that the arm's-length principle is well conducted and that artistic considerations always override politics. (Liu, interview of 25 May 2018). So, for the NCKSCC, the programme of work presented must be exciting, innovative and popular, but at the same time fall within the limits set by MOE/MOC policy KPIs. Exceeding those limits in some way would break the trust between the Minister and the Director. It would risk a reprimand from the Minister and call into question future funding.

#### **4.3.2 The Launch of the National Performing Arts Centre**

On 9 January 2014, the Legislative Yuan approved the *Act for Establishment of the National Performing Arts Centre*, a new Board of Directors was set up in March that year and the new Centre was officially opened on 2 April 2014 when the NCKSCC became the basis of the new National Performing Arts Centre, an umbrella organisation consisting of the Taipei-based National Theatre & Concert Hall (NTCH) along with two new venues. The Centre was later transferred to the MOC from the MOE. Both the new centres were delayed in their opening, but the National Taichung Theatre (NTT) in central Taiwan opened in September 2016, and the National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts (Weiwuying)<sup>22</sup> in south Taiwan opened in October

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<sup>22</sup> 'Weiwuying' was originally the name of a military camp which had served as an army recruitment base in the 1950s but later fell into disuse. The land was re-purposed as a park and arts space, and was chosen by the CCA to establish the new national performing arts centre in 2003 (The Preparatory Office of Weiwuying, 2016). Although the new centre's official name



2018. The original NCKSCC resident company, the National Symphony Orchestra also became an affiliated performance company of the NPAC. These initiatives have been heralded as a milestone in the development of Taiwan's performing arts because there had been no new professional national performing arts venue created since the NCKSCC was launched in 1987 (NPAC, 2019).

The NPAC's aims are 'to enhance the level of national performing arts', 'to strengthen the capability for international competition' and thereby 'to start the cultural innovation construction for the new era of Taiwan's performing arts development' (NPAC, 2019). This thesis looks at the NPAC's programming from 1987 to 2017 shortly after the NTT had opened, and Weiwuying was about to open. However, programming data for the two new centres is insufficient for useful analysis so the research reported here focuses on the NCKSCC/NTCH's programming.

#### **4.3.2.1 The Idea**

According to Huang Pi-twan, CCA Minister from 2008 to 2009, who initiated the design of the NPAC, the original idea of establishing arts and cultural venues in north, central, south and east Taiwan was one of 'The New Ten Projects' proposed by the central government in 2003. The aim was to make a more equal balance in the cultural life of the different regions of Taiwan. This plan later changed dramatically and, as far as the performing arts are concerned, Weiwuying was the only survivor of it. At that time, the idea of changing the NCKSCC into the National Performing Arts Centre had not emerged (Huang, interview of 4 December 2015). The Preparatory Office of the Weiwuying Centre for the Arts was established in 2006 under the CCA. With the

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is the National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts, the historical 'Weiwuying' has been is kept as its title.

NCKSCC existing in the north of Taiwan, Weiwuying was intended to create a balance between the north and the south (The Preparatory Office of Weiwuying, 2016). However, the original vision of making a similar balance across every region of Taiwan was forgotten.

Institutionally, the NCKSCC was under the MOE as a 'social educational' venue when it was planned, but by contrast, Weiwuying was directly under the CCA (later the MOC) as a professional performing centre from the start. By that time, the NCKSCC had become Taiwan's first non-departmental public body and in order to cover both it and the new centre, the CCA created an umbrella organisation for the two centres instead of creating a second separate non-departmental body. Huang Pi-twan confirms that she proposed the structure of the umbrella organisation NPAC. She felt that since the NCKSCC had nearly 30 years rich experience in how to operate a performing arts centre in all aspects such as programming, stage management, front of house management, international exchange and ticketing systems, there was great benefit in making the new performing arts centre a partner so that it could learn all of those skills. More importantly, Huang saw the advantage of the NCKSCC's intuitional status:

The NCKSCC had been a non-departmental public body for a decade. It was experienced in how to function in that mode and it would be ideal for the new centre become part of it, so that time and manpower could be saved. Besides, I did not think we had enough arts professionals in Taiwan to form a separate Board for the Weiwuying. (Huang, interview of 4 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Since NDPBs were a novelty in Taiwan there was little experience of how best to operate them at that time, but Taiwanese society seemed to believe that this arm's-length principle was an effective way to operate arts organisations.

According to Wang Wen-yi, the first Artistic Director (2014-2018) of the National Taichung Theatre, when the members of the Legislative Yuan deliberated the *Act of Establishment for the National Performing Arts Centre*, the representatives from central Taiwan argued for an additional venue in central Taiwan in order to create a proper regional balance. Actually, in the Government's 2003 'New Ten Projects', the arts organisation planned for Taichung was a 'Guggenheim Museum'. However, the cost was so huge that the plan was never realised and it was then deleted from the national project. Instead of a museum, the city of Taichung took the land it had earmarked to create a performing arts centre, authorised at the municipal level. However, the Taichung city government soon realised that it could not itself afford to run the centre that they had planned, so they decided to 'donate' the venue to the central government (Wang, interview of 5 July 2018).

This would mean that the NPAC would have three complexes in Taiwan. This 'perfect idea' was supported by all members of the Legislative Yuan and the MOC was obliged to agree to expand the scale of the NPAC's umbrella to three complexes. The MOC was reluctant to accept this new responsibility as it would not be in accordance with the national plan and it would lead to a complex pattern of ownership. Moreover, it would add to the Ministry's financial burden. Wang Wen-yi, comments:

This meant that there was a lack of vision on national cultural policy. The fact that there are now three centres in three regional cities sounds sensible, but this is not the result of deliberate planning through a cultural policy. It is more a question of political convenience. (Wang, interview of 5 July 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

In reality, while it may now sound logical to have three NPAC venues in north, central and south Taiwan to make a good nationwide balance, it is reasonable to ask why the Government did not start with a comprehensive plan or follow the original 'New Ten Projects' idea to make a proper geographical balance across Taiwan. What is more,

Taiwan is traditionally divided into four parts, north, central, south and east, so the three-centre scheme which omits east Taiwan still leaves an unbalanced plan. Geographically, the NPAC cannot be seen as truly national until there is also a venue in east Taiwan.

This is a reflection of Taiwan's cultural hierarchy and also a hegemony that exists in the Government's performing arts policy which continues to be perpetuated, perhaps unthinkingly. In addition, although the idea to establish new national performing arts centres had been proposed many years ago, there was a long gap between the opening of the NCKSCC in 1987 and any action to make other national performing centres a reality. This is good evidence that performing arts policy takes a low priority for the Government. Even though performing arts companies are lively and well developed in Taiwan, government attention has been elsewhere.

#### **4.3.2.2 A New Picture with Two New Venues**

Both the National Taichung Theatre and the National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts (Weiwuying) were planned after Taiwan's move to democracy, indicating that Taiwanese society had then become more open-minded, liberal and confident in its Taiwanese identity. The two new venues skip Wolff's (2019) first three generations of PAC development and leap directly into generation 4 as a 'multi-functional nexus with strong connections to the local community'. The functions and focus of these two centres are now totally different from the time when the NCKSCC was opened 30 years ago. At that time the NCKSCC was a high arts venue for the elite that gave prestige to the capital and even to the whole country. But both new centres show their commitment to local connections and are keen to inject a local perspective into the arts.

Institutionally, before opening, both new centres were under the non-departmental public body NPAC so they were conscious of their independence and autonomy. They were also aware of the NCKSCC's evolutionary history and were determined to learn from that experience and not to spend time in repeating the journey that the NCKSCC had already travelled. The Board of the NPAC has the same number of members as that of the NCKSCC and still includes representatives from the Government (Laws & Regulations Database of the ROC, 2016). Nevertheless, the Board's responsibilities now cover three centres rather than one, which is likely to concentrate their minds on issues of broad policy rather than on detailed programmes. In other words, the contribution from governmental representatives is diminishing. Wang Wen-yi, the first Artistic Director of the NTT (2014-2018), recalls:

The Board members from the Ministry of Education and Foreign Affairs seldom comment at Board meetings. I felt that they attended meetings because they had to. The Board member from the Ministry of Culture would 'remind' meetings of the general policy direction, which was not a problem since the Ministry's policy directions normally matched the NPAC's objectives. I believe both the MOC and NPAC are on the same page as far as the performing arts are concerned, and the MOC is really helpful in allocating budgets. All in all, the MOC is very cautious and respectful of the arm's-length principle. (Wang, interview of 5 July 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Chien Wen-ping, the first Artistic Director of Weiwuying, agrees with this and adds that sometimes Board members who are government representatives explained what their ministries were currently promoting and that there were grants available. However, how Weiwuying responded this information was entirely its own decision (Chien, interview of 1 June 2018).

It is also notable that the NPAC's board members requested a seat on the Board for Hakka and indigenous people, and also representatives from the regions where the

Centre is located (MOC, 2018). This enthusiasm for broad representation on the Board was not evident when the NCKSCC's Board was originally set up and it demonstrates how cultural diversity and localism have become important for Taiwanese society today.

Significantly, Wang Wen-yi, pointed out that even though the MOC respects the arm's-length principle, other government departments are not used to working in this way and are not properly aware that the NPAC is not a government institution. This means that departments such as the Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, the Executive Yuan and the National Audit Office, still scrutinise the NPAC as though it were a government organisation. They habitually ask detailed questions and attempt to impose bureaucratic requirements when, for example, wanting to apply government financial regulations to the NPAC. This is very frustrating for the NPAC team and, according to Wang, 'the MOC should spend more time communicating with other government departments rather than leaving the NPAC to deal with issues brought up by them' (Wang, interview of 5 July 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author).

These two new centres have developed programme plans which are closely connected to their local communities and this again reflects current thoughts about Taiwanese identity and liberal status. This is a very different approach from that of the NCKSCC which, when it was launched in 1987, naturally followed the Chinese identity and political climate of that time. The compatibility in cultural policy between the Government and the NCKSCC meant that there was no pressure for the arm's-length principle to be disregarded and that situation remains today since the policies of the Government and the NPAC are still on the same page. Wang Wen-yi, the first Artistic Director of the NTT (2014-2018), explains that 'the similarity between the MOC's cultural policy and NPAC's objectives, which meant that they do not conflict

with one another, is the result of great minds thinking alike' (Wang, interview of 5 July 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author). Chien Wen-ping, the first Artistic Director of Weiwuying agrees:

Honestly speaking, we did not take account of the MOC's cultural policy. Nevertheless, at the end of day, you would find that their cultural policy and our objectives all point towards the same goals, such as localisation and cultural equality. We are actually doing the same thing in aiming at how to make the performing arts rooted in the community and how to promote them to everyone effectively. All in all, what we do and what the MOC cultural policy sets out are just the same. (Chien, interview of 1 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Influences on programming from politics and from national or cultural identity are not an issue for the two centres. Wang Wen-yi emphasises:

When doing the programming I don't feel any political or identity factors influence us because I think Taiwan's most important value is diversity and resilience. People nowadays clearly acknowledge it, highly appreciate it and are very proud of it in Taiwan. It becomes second nature as part of our life and people no longer need to underscore it all the time. For us, the most important thing is the quality of the programmes. (Wang, interview of 5 July 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Chien Wen-ping of Weiwuying agrees with this and adds that there are many challenges for programming, but ideology and identity are not among them. Chien explains that originally when the structure of the NPAC was limited to the current National Theatre & Concert Hall (NTCH) in Taipei and a new centre in Kaohsiung, the position of Weiwuying was thought of as 'NTCH southern version', as if it were a branch. However, this is not the way it is seen today as the Weiwuying is a unique individual performing arts centre with its own character. He stresses:

For a long time, Taiwan only had a single performing arts centre, the NTCH, and everything was measured against the NTCH standard. I feel it is a new

start now. This is not just creating a balance for the different regions of Taiwan; it is time to turn Taiwan's performing arts axis upside down and establish a new environment. (Chien, interview of 1 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

The reality is that, although the three component members of the NPAC share a common mission of cultivating talent (creativity, curation, administration, technician, production and global advancement); international collaboration (joint collaboration with global organisations, collaboration in international productions, connecting with other theatres); and local development (professional theatre management, outstanding programmes, joint collaboration, education and community) (NTT, 2016), they do not duplicate each other; they have different tasks and objectives with different characters based on the region where they are located. As a result, they develop their own strategies and identities.

Even the original member, the NTCH, feels this clear distinction although Lee Huey-mei, Artistic Director from 2014 to 2018, worries that the size of NPAC has now tripled from its original single centre but the Government budget has not kept pace. Nevertheless, in Lee's opinion it has been a very positive start for Taiwan's performing arts scene because the three centres can collaborate, co-commission, co-produce and co-invite programmes. Also, more centres means more opportunities for Taiwanese artists and companies. The market has expanded both internally and internationally and Taiwan has become more appealing for international artists to visit. The result is that the performing arts are more accessible for audiences nation-wide and the NPAC's proposed vision is now starting to become a reality (Lee, interview of 7 December 2015).



## 4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the development of the performing arts and of performing arts centres in Taiwan. Its aim has been to show how the Government supports them and to reveal the relationship between the Government and the NCKSCC/NPAC. It begins with the discussion on the definition of ‘performing arts’, and makes a distinction between ‘performance arts’ and ‘performing arts’ in the Taiwanese context. For practical reasons this thesis restricts the definition of performing arts to theatre (contemporary and traditional), dance and music, and by extension to any new kind of performing art presented on stage. The chapter continues by exploring the evolution of Taiwan’s performing arts in relation to Taiwanese identity and performing arts policy as well as the development of its performing arts centres. It then concentrates on the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (later the National Performing Arts Centre) to examine the correlation between cultural policy and cultural autonomy.

The research shows that the development of Taiwan’s performing arts since 1949 reflects the change of the political system from authoritarianism to democracy. It is also closely associated with the related change in Taiwanese identity from an era dominated by the supremacy of Chinese culture to a commitment to creating a contemporary Chinese performing arts landscape in Taiwan which is conscious of Western influences. Recent emphasis has been on searching out Taiwanese roots and creating work that reflects the diversity of Taiwaneseeness (*Taiwan shing*, 台灣性).

The establishment of the CCA in 1981 raised culture to Cabinet-level in the Government and the formation of the NCAF in 1996, along with government subsidy for the arts, acknowledged that financial support can benefit both the public and the Government. Before the establishment of the NCKSCC in 1987, the Government had

established performing arts ‘venues’ rather than true performing arts centres with functioning programming departments. For decades after its opening, the NCKSCC remained the only national professional PAC in Taiwan until the formation of the NPAC in 2014.

Until recently, the style of the NCKSCC’s buildings and the way it operated demonstrated its political agenda in a way that was likely to have alienated many artists and members of the general public. Today by contrast, the Centre aims for accessibility to artists and the public as a multi-functional centre. The programming department of the Centre generates its identity by deciding what appears there and drives the Centre’s development. Programmers are responsible for the application of government cultural policy while at the same time reflecting Taiwanese identity. The NCKSCC’s history follows the historical development of politics and society in Taiwan as a whole.

The Centre began life as the Government’s flagship cultural agency with specific responsibility for promoting the Government’s political agenda. But with the coming of democracy and its reinvention as a non-departmental autonomous public body the Centre’s Directors have broadened the programming according to their own ideas and to the cultural and social environment of their time. However, because of its state funding, it has to remain aware of government policy.

The Centre’s programming has a slow momentum because programmes are commissioned up to two years in advance. This means that the NCKSCC appears to develop its objectives independently because they are set in advance of rapidly changing political thinking. Nevertheless, all the significant players in this field report that there is strong rapport and collaboration between the Centre and the Government so that the Centre is well aware of government thinking. Government policy is in the minds of the Centre’s Board members as they oversee its work so the NCKSCC’s objectives dovetail with those of the Government and cultural policy is worded in such

a general way that the Centre can make almost anything it wants to do appear to comply with it. Political influence is maintained in an implicit and informal way.

The NCKSCC's legal status as a non-departmental public body has been of great significance in its operation since 2004. Even though more than 50% of its operational income is government subsidy, it is a fundamental principle that the Centre is autonomous without government intervention. This requires trust, openness and mutual support from both sides of a relationship that is at arm's length but not totally independent. Making the relationship operate smoothly requires an appropriate distance between the Centre and its Ministry. The NCKSCC is only autonomous within set limits.

The NPAC now has three venues in north, central and south Taiwan to make a better nationwide balance. It continues to be a non-governmental body, and the relationship between it and the MOC remains unchanged. Nevertheless, the dynamic between the organisations is now different because the NCKSCC is no longer the sole focus of the Board. The new NTT and Weiwuying, need to establish themselves within their local communities, to create their own identity, and to avoid appearing to be merely local branches of the NCKSCC.

Since it transferred to the MOC, the NPAC has become a large proportion of that Ministry's responsibility, so it could receive closer ministerial attention and scrutiny than in the past. Also, since the NPAC is now closer to the heart of cultural policy-making personal relationships between the two bodies are especially important. There may be closer scrutiny, but there is also more opportunity for the Centre to have an influence over cultural policy. With the MOC's Evaluation Committee and its KPIs, the NPAC cannot act too far out of line with Ministry thinking. How to harmonise programming, the audience and cultural policy is therefore the critical crucial task for the NPAC in the future. Both the MOC and NPAC are still young, so continued

observation and data collection to see how the relationship develops would provide significant material for future research.

## **Chapter 5: The NCKSCC's Programmes**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter explores the relationship between the historical changes in programming at the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (NCKSCC) and the evolution of Taiwanese identity. Although the main research concern of this thesis is the newly formed National Performing Arts Centre (NPAC), the chapter focuses on the NCKSCC's programmes because its programme data accumulated over more than 30 years gives a large enough body of data for meaningful analysis. The other two venues of the NPAC (the National Taichung Theatre that opened in September 2016 and the National Kaohsiung Centre for the Arts which was launched in October 2018) are too new so their programming has not been included here.

Programming gives a performing arts centre its character and identity. As a national PAC, the programmes that the NCKSCC chooses to show epitomise the development of Taiwanese society and reflect the zeitgeist of the country.

The strategy for analysis of the data is to start by collating the statistics of produced and presented programmes organised at the NCKSCC from its opening in 1987 until the end of its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary year in 2017. A total of 4,067 programmes have been categorised according to their Taiwanese, Chinese and international elements. The next step is to discover whether there is any connection or relationship between the Centre's programming and shifts in Taiwanese identity from monocultural Chinese to multicultural Taiwanese.

After the general analysis of the programmes, three case studies are used to investigate in more detail: (1) the NCKSCC's series of 'Flagship Productions'; (2) the productions of the NCKSCC's associate company, Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of

Taiwan; and (3) the productions of another NCKSCC associate company, Guo Guang Opera Company, to discover whether their programmes can be correlated with the development of Taiwanese identity through the way that their programmers, artists and companies have seen it through the years.

## **5.2 Programmes at the NCKSCC between 1987 and 2017**

### **5.2.1 Statistics and Analysis**

#### **Background**

Programmes are the core activity of PACs and the way they set about generating their programmes depends on both internal and external factors. External considerations include the mission that the PAC has been given by its funding body and relationship that it has with its local community. Internally, much depends on the Centre's staff: their roles, responsibilities and personal enthusiasms. Both these considerations may be subject to change. Missions may change with new political masters, while new internal staff, particularly at senior level, bring with them new ideas and new experience and all this means that programming evolves with time (Micocci, 2017: 82-83). Section 4.3.1.3 outlined three main modes of programming that are characteristic of performing arts centres and through which they reach their audiences: producing, presenting and renting (Micocci, 2017: 63).

The NCKSCC fits neatly into the picture that Micocci describes in its modes of programming and the Centre's programmes include those it produces itself as well as productions presented in collaboration with others. As a resident company, the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) held a special relationship with the Centre with respect to its use of the venues and, according to Huang Pen-ting, NCKSCC Programme Manager (2014-2016), the NSO has advance participation in planning by

the Programming Department and is given priority commitments for a certain number of dates at the venues. Its programmes are included within the Centre's own programmes (Huang, interview of 3 June 2018).

Table 4.4 (p.195) shows the ratio of number of the Centre's own programmes to rented performances was approximately 30% to 70%. In spite of rented programmes form the majority of the NCKSCC's offer to the public year by year, Li Chia-chi, Programme Manager (2012-2014), insists that 'the Centre sees the programmes it presents itself as its core work because they represent its own response to its mission as defined by its political masters' (Li, interview of 27 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author). Because of this, the analysis here focuses on the programmes it either produces or presents despite the fact that in reality the general public is probably unaware of the origins of the shows they attend and have little concern about who has produced them (Mocicci, 2017: 63). Although the NCKSCC is charged with playing a central and influential part in the cultural life of Taiwan, it has been comparatively indifferent to the content of the programmes that it rents as long as they are of sufficient artistic quality. Huang Pen-ting, NCKSCC Programme Manager (2014-2016), explains that the Centre concerns itself mainly with their genres and how they are arranged and scheduled (Huang, interview of 3 July 2018).

### **The venues**

The NCKSCC has a range of venues where it can present programmes. It has two buildings, the National Theatre and the National Concert Hall, with four indoor venues and also outdoor plazas all of which are available for the presentation of programmes. The National Theatre has a 'grand theatre' and an 'experimental theatre', while the National Concert Hall contains both a 'main concert hall' and a 'recital hall'. The NCKSCC's programmes therefore cover a range of theatre, music and dance.

Generally speaking, programmes at the National Theatre take place on a weekly basis with three to five performances, whereas performances at the National Concert Hall are normally one-night stands.

### **Programming**

The NCKSCC has been the country's busiest and most sought-after performing arts centre for many years, and programming for a mixed-programme performing arts centre is a process of making a series of choices: matching the works to the relevant audience; deciding programme genres and frequencies; fulfilling responsibilities to its society and community. For each calendar year, there are a maximum of 52 programme slots to fill at the National Theatre and the Experimental Theatre, and as many as 365 slots to fill at the Concert Hall and the Recital Hall.

### **Collection of data**

The Performing Arts Library of the NCKSCC holds details of the programmes at the Centre from its opening in 1987. Data collected from this source include: programme titles; company and artist names; performers; programme contents; dates. There was a total of 4,067 programmes over this period; they are listed in the tables of Appendix 3 (p. 323-333) in chronological order and have been categorised into different 'genres': music/opera; dance/physical theatre/new circus; theatre/traditional theatre. At the NCKSCC, artistic 'genres' remain important categories of classification for its programmes, and the categories used here are those that the Centre uses for its annual reports.

### **Genre definitions**

- **Music/Opera:** the types of **Music** recognised here refer to those normally given in concerts or performances, such as *classical music*, e.g. the Cleveland Orchestra



(1987) and Alicia de Larrocha's piano recital (1989); *traditional music*, e.g. the Nan guan concert by the Tainan Nan guan Ensemble (1987) and the National Experimental Chinese Orchestra's concert (1996); *contemporary music*, e.g. the Ensemble Modern concert (2004) and Ensemble Intercontemporain's concert (2016); *jazz*, e.g. the Joe Lovano & Bill Mays Trio (2004) and the Stacey Kent concert (2005), and (very rarely) *popular music*. **Opera** refers to programmes from the Western classical opera tradition such as *La Traviata* by New York City Opera (1987) and *Tosca* by NSO Opera (2002). New opera productions, such as the NCKSCC's Flagship Production *The Black Bearded Bible Man* and NSO Opera's *La Peintre* are also included in this category. 'Chinese opera' and 'Taiwanese opera' are listed separately under the 'theatre/traditional theatre' genre.

- **Dance/Physical Theatre/New Circus:** this genre is all about 'movement'. **Dance** includes *ballet*, e.g. *Giselle* by Dutch National Ballet (1988) and *Romeo & Juliet* by the UK's Royal Ballet; *folk dance*, e.g. the Bongsan Mask Dance Company (1989) and the Taipei Folk Dance Theatre (2012); *dance theatre* e.g. *Körper* by Sasha Waltz & Guests and *Masurca Fogo* by Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch (2007) and *contemporary dance*, e.g. the Trisha Brown Dance Company (1988) and *Dream Illusion Bubble Shadow* by Dance Forum Taipei (2014). **Physical Theatre** focuses on the physical motion of performers, such as *Just for Show* by DV8 Physical Theatre (2004). **New Circus** (or contemporary circus) is similar to physical theatre, and differs from traditional circus in that animals are not involved. Instead, it consists of acrobatics, trapeze, juggling, comedy, magic, martial arts and so on. Some examples are *The 7 Fingers* by Les 7 Doigts de la Main (2006) and *Ningen* by Cirque Baroque (2006).
- **Theatre/Traditional Theatre:** **Theatre** here refers to drama, musical theatre,

comedy and mime based on Western theatre traditions e.g. *Hamlet* by Contemporary Legend Theatre (1990), *Six Characters in Search of an Author* by American Repertory Theatre (1995), *A Dream Like a Dream* by Performance Workshop (2005). **Traditional Theatre** refers to theatre forms from non-Western cultures, such as Japanese Noh theatre, Chinese opera, Taiwanese opera, and so on. The events that are referred to in the English language as Chinese or Taiwanese ‘operas’ are in reality, more akin to ‘music theatre’ as they include a significant component of spoken text. In the Chinese languages they are regarded as ‘theatre’.

### **Content analysis**

The analysis of the produced and presented programmes at the NCKSCC aims to discover whether there has been a shift in the NCKSCC’s programming with respect to Taiwanese content over the last 31 years. The first task is to score the programmes according to the country of origin of the performers. They have been divided into three categories: (a) Taiwanese artists and companies; (b) international collaboration; and (c) international artists and companies. Companies and artists from China (PRC) are considered ‘international’ in this analysis. The next stage is to subdivide the programmes involving the Taiwanese artists and companies in category (a) according to whether they contain Taiwanese elements, Chinese elements or international elements. These three elements need some explanation:

- **Taiwanese element:** refers to programme contents which are native Taiwanese, such as Taiwanese opera, Taiwanese composers or indigenous dance, e.g. *The Evening of Hakka Bayin Music* (1988), *Returning to the Past: The Evening of Taiwanese Folk Songs* (1989), *Taiwanese Indigenous Dance Series: Amis* (1990),

*Miroirs de Vie* by Legend Lin Dance Theatre (1995), and *A Dizzy Woman, I Do I Do!* by Greenray Theatre Company (1997).

- **Chinese element:** refers to programme by Taiwanese artists and companies that consist of traditional or classical Chinese components, such as myths, music compositions, traditional theatre repertoire and any programmes including 'Chinese' in the title, e.g. *An Evening of Chinese Arts Songs* by The Taipei Chinese Orchestra (1987), *General Yang's Escape* by Lu Guang Chinese Opera Company (Army Chinese Opera Company) (1988), *The Phoenix Hairpin* by Guo Guang Opera Company (1997), *Tang Grand Piece, Liquidambar Orientalis* by Neo-Classic Dance Company (2002), *Journey to Shaolin: A Touch of Zen* by U Theatre (2005), *The Feast of Han Xizai* by Han Tang Yuefu Music and Dance Ensemble (2007), *Along the River During the Qingming Festival* by National Chinese Orchestra Taiwan (2009), *The Legend of Peach Blossom Fan* by 1/2 Q Theatre (2012), and *A Vow to The Underworld Spring* by Taipei Opera Theatre (2016).
- **International element:** refers to programmes by Taiwanese companies or artists in which the contents or concepts can be considered international, e.g. in Chen Pi-hsien's Piano Recital (1988), the programme is Western classical music; Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* by Taipei Opera Theatre (1991), *Death of a Salesman* by Performance Workshop (1992), *Ave Maria* by the Taiwan National Choir (1996), *A Russian Tableaux Concert* by the NSO (2000), *The Goodbye Girl* by the Godot Theatre Company (2002), and Mozart's *Così fan tutte* by the NSO (2006).

## Results

Table 5.1 lists all the programmes shown at the NCKSCC from its opening in October in 1987 up to the end of 2017. It lists firstly, the number of Taiwanese, international and international collaborated programmes; and secondly the three subdivisions of the Taiwanese programmes. The average number of programmes each year is between 120 and 130. (NB the National Concert Hall was closed for some months in 2015 for renovation, and the National Theatre was closed for nine months in 2016/2017.)

Appendix 3 (p. 323-333) gives the annual details of the three genres (music, dance, and theatre), using the same categories as Table 5.1, which are summarised in this Table.

**Table 5.1 Programmes produced and presented by the NCKSCC (1987-2017)**

Year	000Programmes by Taiwanese companies/artists				International collaboration programmes	Programmes by international companies/artists	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element	Subtotal			
1987	2	22	19	43	2	14	<b>59</b>
1988	13	61	53	127	8	31	<b>166</b>
1989	13	51	88	152	19	47	<b>218</b>
1990	19	46	115	180	19	70	<b>269</b>
1991	15	52	70	137	14	28	<b>179</b>
1992	21	35	62	118	9	22	<b>149</b>
1993	20	24	44	88	16	18 (PRC 1)	<b>122</b>
1994	23	20	54	97	8	28	<b>133</b>
1995	17	18	53	88	6	15 (PRC 1)	<b>109</b>
1996	19	15	52	86	15	15	<b>116</b>
1997	28	16	34	78	16	21 (PRC 4)	<b>115</b>
1998	26	12	46	84	22	12 (PRC 3)	<b>118</b>
1999	14	16	39	69	22	11 (PRC 2)	<b>102</b>
2000	15	17	39	71	19	9 (PRC 3)	<b>99</b>
2001	24	10	37	71	18	16 (PRC 2)	<b>105</b>
2002	43	19	28	90	31	20 (PRC 4)	<b>141</b>
2003	38	19	51	108	16	22 (PRC 2)	<b>146</b>

2004	37	14	45	96	15	36 (PRC 2)	<b>147</b>
2005	33	15	28	76	23	34 (PRC 5)	<b>133</b>
2006	26	10	30	66	29	35 (PRC2)	<b>130</b>
2007	34	18	30	82	24	20	<b>126</b>
2008	40	4	49	93	15	21	<b>129</b>
2009	35	9	48	92	17	23	<b>132</b>
2010	28	9	41	78	19	23	<b>120</b>
2011	33	5	41	79	22	24 (PRC1)	<b>125</b>
2012	18	6	39	63	26	30 (PRC1)	<b>119</b>
2013	21	0	40	61	26	32	<b>119</b>
2014	25	5	30	60	31	26 (PRC1)	<b>117</b>
2015	24	3	36	63	15	23	<b>101</b>
2016	21	1	33	55	21	25	<b>101</b>
2017	38	0	31	69	25	28 (PRC 1)	<b>122</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>1,406</b>	<b>2,721</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>4,067</b>

\*PRC: People's Republic of China. Companies/Artists from the PRC is in the category of international companies/artists.

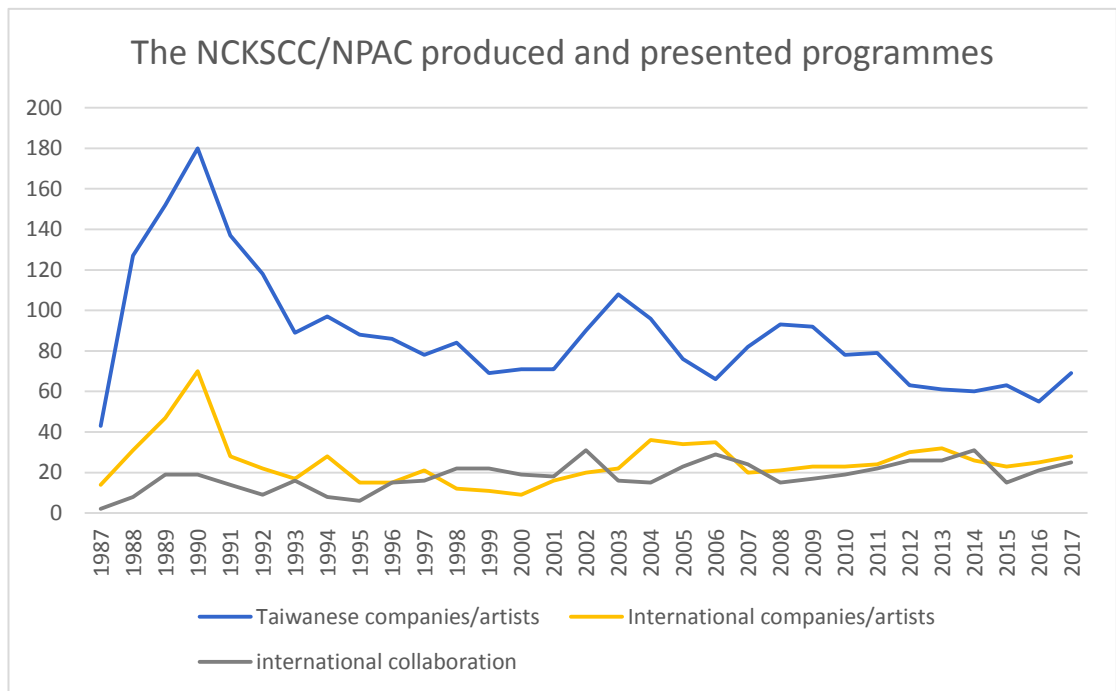
Source: own compilation from the programme data of the NCKSCC Performing Arts Library.

### **The initial findings**

As the samples of the NCKSCC's past 31 years are large enough, statistical analysis of programme data carried out here is able to identify fundamental trends and to show how the programmes at the NCKSCC have evolved over the years. Because the slots at the National Theatre (per week) and Concert Hall (per day) are different, music programmes, including those of the resident National Symphony Orchestra occupy a large proportion of the data in Table 5.1. This influences the analysis of the data by increasing the representation of both the music programme category and the international element/international collaboration programmes.

Based on the statistics of Table 5.1, Chart 5.1 gives an overview of the programmes produced and presented by the NCKSCC, indicating the numbers for each of three groups: Taiwanese companies and artists, international collaboration, and international companies and artists.

**Chart 5.1 The NCKSCC/NPAC produced and presented programmes (1987-2017)**

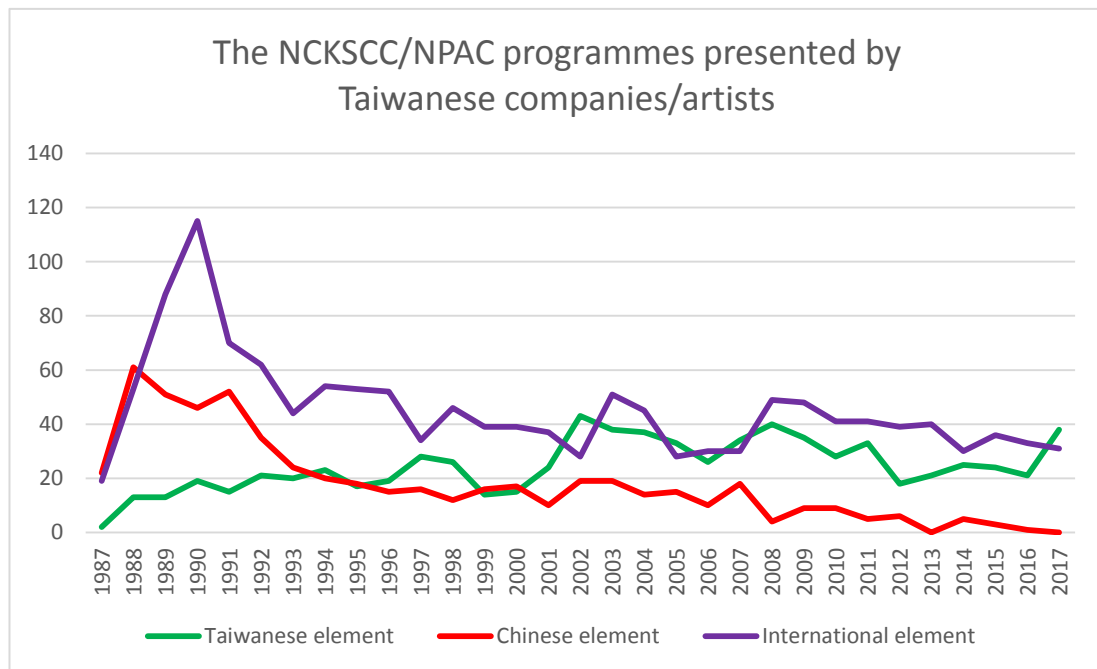


Source: own compilation from Table 5.1.

Chart 5.1 shows that throughout the study period programmes by Taiwanese companies and artists are consistently the overwhelming majority. This is consistent with the main mission of the NCKSCC which is to support Taiwanese companies and artists. Chart 5.1 also illustrates the overall decline in the number of programmes that the NCKSCC produced or presented over time. The reason for this, according to Lee Huey-mei (Artistic Director 2014-2018) is that there was a limited budget for the Centre to create events and there was pressure from private companies to hire the venues (interview of 7 December 2015). This meant that the initial six years were the high point of programmes produced or presented by the NCKSCC, after which there was more emphasis on venue rental.

Chart 5.2 focuses on those programmes from Chart 5.1 that only involve Taiwanese companies and artists. It then analyses the programmes according to three elements: Taiwanese, Chinese and international.

**Chart 5.2 The NCKSCC/NPAC programmes presented by Taiwanese companies/artists (1987-2017)**



Source: own compilation from Table 5.1.

Chart 5.2 shows not only that Taiwanese performing arts have been deeply influenced by Western culture, especially in the early years, but also that there has been a progressive increase over the past 31 years of the Taiwanese element in the programmes which eventually surpassed the declining Chinese element. This corresponds with the change of cultural policy and the shift of Taiwanese identity, which will be discussed below in Section 5.2.2.

The Taiwanese programmes that have a Chinese element are mostly Chinese Opera and concerts of Chinese Music. Subdividing these programmes involves an element of judgement. As discussed in Chapter 2, Min-nan Taiwanese and Hakka Taiwanese cultures have developed since the start of Chinese migration to Taiwan some centuries ago. This means that the difference between the Taiwanese culture of people who emigrated from the mainland and exclusively Chinese cultural traditions

uninfluenced by migration is a question of the timing of people's arrival in Taiwan. The distinction is real, but not clear-cut.

For this reason, the traditional Chinese Guo Guang Opera Company and the National Chinese Orchestra Taiwan found themselves in a difficult position after the start of democracy in Taiwan because the public began to favour Taiwanese cultural elements over traditional Chinese. Wong An-chi, Artistic Director of Guo Guang Opera Company, claims that after reconnecting with mainland China in 1987, and having seen the exquisite traditional Chinese Opera performances from China, the Taiwanese Chinese Opera was faced with the problem of how to position themselves (Wong, 2002). The newly-launched Guo Guang Opera Company had to find its own position by 'localising Chinese Opera' and trying to find a new approach for Taiwan's Chinese Opera. Their response to this dilemma was to create the *Taiwan Trilogy* (*Mazu* in 1998, *Cheng Ch'eng-kung and Taiwan* in 1999, and *Liao Tien Ting* in 1999). The *Trilogy* is based on the idea that 'Taiwanese Chinese Opera would escape from the perspective of mainland China, and officially recognise the land where it is based and thus embrace native Taiwan' (Wong, 2002: 13).

Even the National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan, which normally plays Western classical music, tries to create new productions or programmes with a greater representation of Taiwanese elements in order to attract Taiwanese audiences. Chien Wen-ping, who was Music Director of the NSO from 2001-2007, outlines its responsibility:

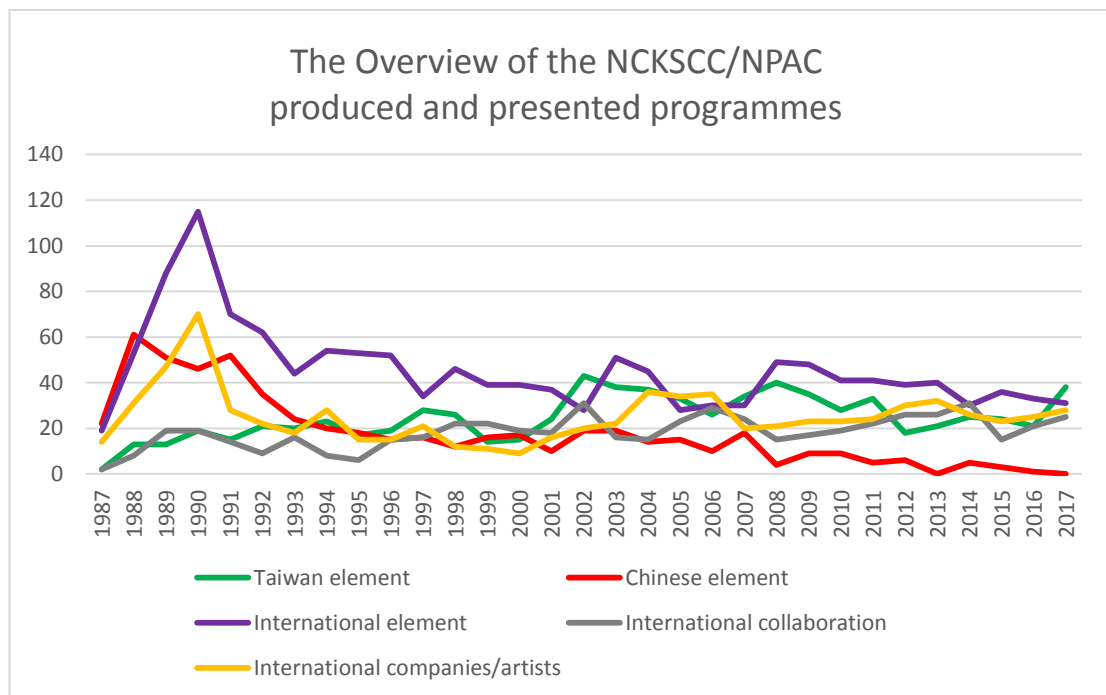
As soon as I was on board as the Music Director, I felt I had the responsibility for our own land to encourage Taiwanese composers, especially young talent. It is important to develop the ability of Taiwanese composers to compose symphonic works and to create our own works. That is why I started the 'commission works' project and each year there were at least two works by Taiwanese composers. Those works were not only played by the NSO but



also recorded and then published by the NCKSCC. We need to try our best to raise the level of Taiwan's symphonic composing. (Chien, interview of 1 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Chart 5.3 combines all the information in Charts 5.1 and 5.2 to give an overview of the programmes produced and presented by the NCKSCC in all five categories.

**Chart 5.3 The overview of the NCKSCC/NPAC produced and presented programmes (1987-2017)**



Source: own compilation from Table 5.1.

In this overall picture, Taiwanese programmes are in the majority at the NCKSCC, and within this category, despite the fluctuations in both Chinese and Taiwanese elements, Taiwanese programmes with an international element always predominate. It is inevitable for Taiwanese symphony orchestras and music ensembles to play Western classical music in their programmes, and it is also common for Taiwanese theatre companies, and even traditional theatre troupes, to interpret works by Western playwrights such as *Endgame* (Samuel Beckett) by Tainaner Ensemble (2004),

*Metamorphosis* (Franz Kafka) by Contemporary Legend Theatre (2013), and *Oedipus Tyrannus* (Sophocles) by Golden Bough Theatre (2016). Wu Ching-jiyi, a performing arts pioneer of Taiwan and NCKSCC Chairman, 2006-2007, claims that ‘this is all very natural because performing arts is a concept originating in Western culture, as indeed is the very idea of a Performing Arts Centre (PAC)’ (Wu, interview of 3 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author).

### **5.2.2 Programming and Taiwanese Identity Shift**

The official opening of Taiwan’s first national performing arts centre on 31 October 1987 was the most important cultural event in the country’s history. For a building project of such prestige and political significance, it is not surprising that there was considerable political involvement in the planning stages of the new national performing arts centre by the KMT government. Its aim was to create a building that would be a fitting home for Chinese culture, for which it was keen to act as guardian (Hu, interview of 25 May 2018). It also demonstrated its prominence in political culture when the then Vice-President, Lee Teng-hui beat a gong to launch the National Theatre with an updated version of the traditional Chinese Opera *Lady Wen-Chi’s Captivity and Return* (*Wen Chi kuei han*, 新文姬歸漢). Premier Yu Guo-hua beat another gong at the National Concert Hall to introduce a choral symphonic work *Chinese Carol: in memory of President Chiang Kai-shek* (*Zhonghua sung ke*, 中華頌歌) (NCKSCC, 2007: 22). The evening was an extraordinary milestone in the development of the performing arts in Taiwan; both programmes had a strong Chinese element and were performed in a theatre and concert hall contained within a traditional Chinese-style palace.

Although martial law was lifted in the same year in 1987, the Preparatory Office of the National Theatre & Concert Hall began work on 1 February 1985 (Yu, 2007: 15) and, as programmes are normally planned two years in advance, this meant that the NCKSCC's early programming took place during the closing years of the martial law period. These iconic Chinese programmes performed in evidently Chinese-style venues epitomise the social atmosphere and Taiwan's Chinese identity of the time and deliver a clear message from the Government that 'this is the home of *Chinese* performing arts' (NCKSCC, 2007: 14, 22). At this time, the mainland Chinese immigrants of the KMT formed the dominant *ethnie* in Smith's sense (Smith, 1991) and they decided the national identity. Thus, Chinese culture dominated the ideology of the time.

Looking at the figures for the Centre's own programmes, after the grand opening in October 1987, only two months remained until the end of the year and, as Table 5.1 (p. 226-227) shows, during those months, 73% of the programmes were Taiwanese, 3% were international collaboration programmes and 24% were foreign programmes. Within the Taiwanese programmes, 51% had a Chinese element whereas only 5% were exclusively Taiwanese. The remainder had international elements.

During the first six years from 1987 to 1992, the programmes with Chinese elements clearly outweighed those with Taiwanese. But from 1993 onwards, the proportion of Chinese to Taiwanese elements decreased. In 1993 it was 26% Chinese against 22% Taiwanese and in 1994, the number of Taiwanese element programmes outstripped those with a Chinese element for the first time (Taiwanese 24%: Chinese 21%), but except for 1997 and 1998. The difference remained small until 2001 when there were more than twice as many Taiwanese element programmes (34%) than Chinese element programmes (14%). Since 2001, Taiwanese have greatly surpassed Chinese, which eventually diminished to single figure or even zero in 2013 and 2017.

There are also a couple of features in Table 5.1 (p. 226-227) between 1987 until about 1997 that are worth attention:

- (1) The military-owned Chinese opera troupes including army (*Lu Guang*, 陸光), air force (*Da Peng*, 大鵬), and navy (*Hai Guang*, 海光)<sup>23</sup> presented productions of mostly traditional Chinese element at a time when Chinese opera was still referred to as ‘National Opera’ (*Guo chu*, 國劇). Lee Huey-mei, NCKSCC Artistic Director from 2014 to 2018, suggests that during this period, in the performing arts, especially traditional theatre, most of the mainstream groups of virtuosi were 1949 immigrants from China who still yearned for their homeland. They, by definition, had Chinese identity (Lee, interview of 7 December 2015).
- (2) Many programmes were entitled ‘Chinese Series’, especially the concerts by the National Experimental Chinese Orchestra and other such private Chinese music ensembles. The use of the word ‘Chinese’ is interesting here because it refers more to the genre of the performance, rather than to the nationality of the performers. Often, names have been changed so that, for example, performances once known as ‘National Opera’ became ‘Chinese/Peking Opera’ (*Ching chu*, 京劇). However, Chinese music is still referred to as ‘National Music’ (*Guo yue*, 國樂). Examples of ‘Chinese’ series would include the Chinese Contemporary Composer Series concerts (1987), *An Evening of Chinese Folk Song* (1988), *Modern Chinese Opera: A Night of Thunderstorms* by the NSO (1991),

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<sup>23</sup> According to Wong An-chi (2002: 22-23), the 1960s to 1970s was the flourishing period for Taiwan’s Chinese Opera development. After transferring to Taiwan in 1949, many military organisations set up their own Chinese Opera troupes. Also, many Chinese Opera artists arrived in Taiwan with the KMT government. They were recruited by the Chinese Opera troupes organised by the military, and formed three main Chinese Opera troupes owned by the army (*Lu Guang*, 陸光), air force (*Da Peng*, 大鵬), and navy (*Hai Guang*, 海光). In 1995, these three troupes were merged as the Guo Guang Opera Company and were joined in 1996 by the Marine Corps’s Flying Horse Bangzi Opera Team (*Fei Ma Yujiuduei*, 飛馬豫劇隊). The Guo Guang Opera Company was subsequently transferred to the Ministry of Education.

*Orchestral Music with a Chinese Mood* by the Taipei Symphony Orchestra (1992). This last concert brought together mainland Chinese, overseas Chinese, and Taiwanese composers.

In Table 5.1 (p. 226-227), Taiwanese opera or Taiwanese element traditional programmes have been included in the ‘traditional theatre’ category along with Chinese Opera and Bangzi Opera in the Chinese opera family. For example, in 1987 the opening Traditional Theatre Series included three Chinese Opera troupes organised by the military (*Lu Guang*, *Da Peng* and *Hai Guang*), as well as the *Fu Hsing* (復興) Chinese Opera troupe, the Flying Horse Bangzi Opera Team and the *Ming Hwa Yuan* (明華園) Taiwanese Opera Company. These groups were selected to demonstrate Taiwan’s flourishing Chinese traditional theatre scene at the grand opening of the NCKSCC. Another example is the *Chinese Choral History Series* Concerts given by the Taiwan National Choir between 1992 and 1994, which comprised three concerts that showed their composers’ origins: Taiwanese (1992), mainland Chinese (1993), and overseas Chinese (1994). The description ‘Chinese’ was used here in its ethnic sense to cover everybody living in Taiwan and China, as well as overseas people of Chinese origin (*Zhonghua* identity). Hu Yao-heng, the NCKSCC’s Director from 1990 to 1992, claimed that during his period of office, he wanted to show that ‘Chinese (*Zhonghua*) culture is wide-ranging and profound, and it includes Taiwan’ (Hu, interview of 25 May 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author). Views such as this evidently had an influence on the NCKSCC’s programming by reflecting an imagined Chinese community (Anderson, 2016) along with its invented *Zhonghua* traditions (Hobsbawm, 1983).

After the far-reaching political changes in Taiwan’s development to democracy with direct presidential elections in 1996 and the first change in the ruling party in 2000 (see Chapter 2), the distinct shift in Taiwanese identity had a general effect on

the performing arts in Taiwan that included the direction of the programmes at the NCKSCC. A report of work at this time highlighted enthusiasm for ‘localisation’ and a passion for exchange with mainland China. These became a preoccupation for Taiwanese performing arts groups which resulted in attracting more audiences from 1996 onwards. Thereafter, the Taiwanese performing arts scene became more vivid and lively as more acclaimed international companies and artists were brought in and there was increasing international collaboration (NCKSCC 2007: 31).

Records of the programmes at the NCKSCC show that mainland Chinese (PRC) companies and artists started to be invited in 1993 with the performance of *Madam White Snake* by the Sichuan Opera Troupe. Every year since then up to five PRC companies have been invited to perform at the NCKSCC (see Table 5.1 in the ‘international companies/artists’ column marked as PRC). However, most of the PRC companies ‘co-presented’ with other private arts organisations or foundations in Taiwan such as the New Aspect Cultural Foundation or the Arts Formosa Company. It is also worth noting that rental programmes may introduce PRC artists and companies to the NCKSCC through private promoters. Lee Huey-mei, NCKSCC Artistic Director (2014-2018), who has been in charge of programming since the Centre’s opening, explains that when Taiwan (ROC) and China (PRC) started cultural exchanges, people on the two sides of the Taiwan Strait were very inquisitive about each other. Many Chinese performing arts companies were keen to visit Taiwan and Taiwanese audiences were interested to see traditional Chinese theatre troupes such as Peking Opera and Kun Opera. At the beginning, the box office was very good and that encouraged private arts agencies to introduce increasing numbers of Chinese companies to Taiwan. However:

As a ROC national organisation, it was awkward for the NCKSCC to invite PRC companies directly, and that is why there were very few PRC

programmes (see Table 5.1) and nearly all of them were co-invited with private agencies. The initial upsurge declined once curiosity was satisfied and the novelty of PRC companies for the Taiwanese audience wore off. (Lee, interview of 7 December 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author)

On the other hand, during the peak time of cultural exchange, exploration of PRC companies and artists naturally had an impact on the Taiwanese performing arts scene. Creativity was stimulated, especially for companies who worked with traditional Chinese genres, but it also prompted awareness of the differences between Taiwanese Chineseness and PRC Chineseness and this encouraged a pursuit of Taiwaneseeness (*Taiwan shing*, 台灣性) which is apparent on Chart 5.2. Between 1993 and 1995, the numbers of Taiwanese element programmes and Chinese element programmes were nearly the same with Chinese element programmes in a slight majority. However, the situation started to change in 1996, when Taiwanese element programmes became the majority. A slight Taiwanese predominance continued until 2008 (with the exception of 1999 and 2000), since when Taiwanese element programmes have outnumbered Chinese element programmes very substantially.

Artists and performing arts companies also sensed the transformation of Taiwan's social and political atmosphere. The Democratic Progressive Party first came to power in 2000 with a new policy direction of 'Taiwan subjectivity' (*Taiwan jhu ti shing*, 台灣主體性) (Tchen, 2013). Meanwhile, more programmes that focused on Taiwan started to appear. For example, *The Beauty of Taiwanese* by the Taipei Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, the Taipei Philharmonic Chorus and Difang Duana (*Kuo Ying-nan*, 郭英男) & Amis Singers (1997). The Guo Guang Opera Company's *Taiwan Trilogy* (1998-1999) featured a local version of Peking Opera and *Taiwan, Our Mother* by the Holo Taiwanese Opera Troupe (2000) had a newly-created script. Works by Taiwanese composers began to be included in the programmes of Taiwan's National

Symphony Orchestra, the National Chinese Orchestra Taiwan and the Centre's Young Star Series of classical and Chinese music.

At the climax of this urge to focus on local talent between 2008 and 2011, the NCKSCC promoted its 'Images of Taiwan' series which selected the best programmes from its majority Taiwanese programmes with the aim of encouraging Taiwanese artists, developing Taiwanese works and building up Taiwan's cultural strength. The three guidelines for selection were:

- (1)The content of the show should be related to Taiwan or based on Taiwanese stories showing awareness of Taiwan's land, history, cultural diversity and experimental innovation.
- (2)The core value is the 'native trend' concerning all the elements and materials of Taiwan.
- (3)To promote the brand of Taiwan by supporting Taiwanese artists, performers, creators and companies with works rooted in Taiwanese Chinese culture and Taiwanese culture (NCKSCC, 2010: 68-69).

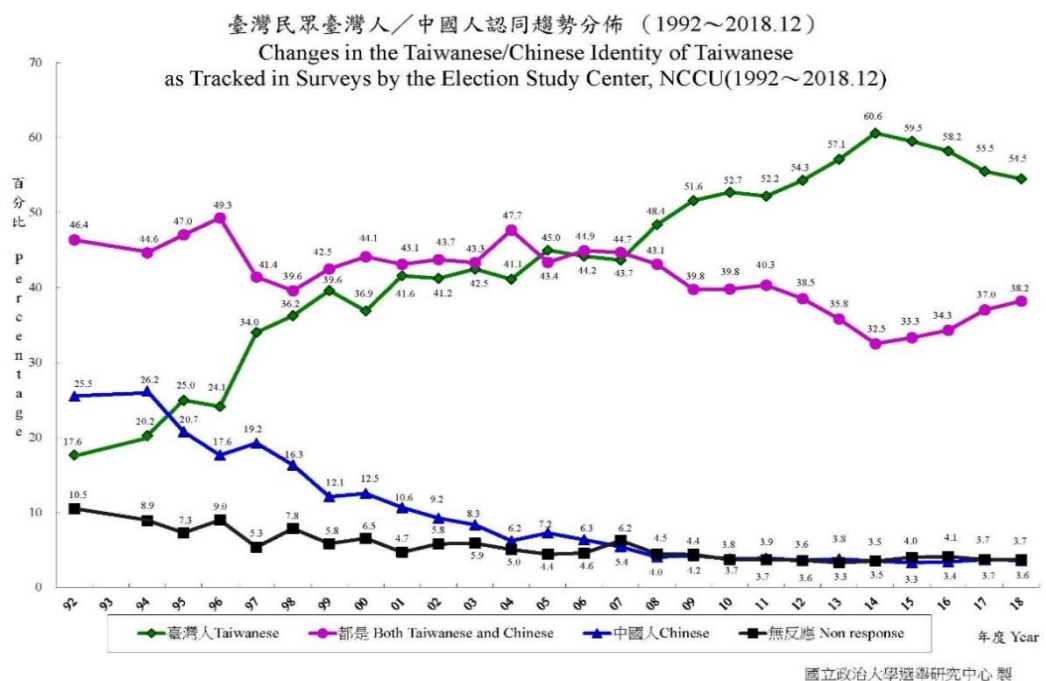
The 'Images of Taiwan' series lasted for four years and, according to Huang Pen-ting, NCKSCC Programme Manager (2014-2016), when a new Artistic Director Huang Pi-twan was appointed in 2010, she decided that 'Taiwaneseness' (*Taiwan shing*, 台灣性) was already well established and the country's multiculturalism sufficiently firmly embedded that there was no longer any need to emphasise Taiwanese elements in the programming. From that date, all programmes by Taiwanese artists or companies have been considered 'Taiwanese', regardless of the elements they contained. As far as presenting programmes was concerned, Taiwanese Chineseness should be considered just one of the cultures comprising overall Taiwanese culture, along with Min-nan, Hakka, indigenous and new migration cultures. In addition, she believed that it would create a hierarchy within Taiwanese programmes if programmes that were not selected for the 'Images of Taiwan' series were perceived as inferior to those selected (Huang, interview of 3 July 2018).



Commenting on this phenomenon, Huang Pi-twan, the Artistic Director, says that ‘Taiwanese identity is formed naturally when the ideology of localisation increases. Such an identity shift is inevitable as new generations are born and grow up in Taiwan’ (Huang, interview of 12 April 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author). As the new Artistic Director appointed by the returning KMT government’s Board, Huang’s comments represent not only the way the direction in which the Centre’s programming headed, but also new ideas on how to understand Taiwaneseeness.

Chart 5.4 has been compiled from a survey carried out by the Election Study Centre of Taiwan’s National Cheng-Chi University (2018). Taiwanese people were asked whether they felt themselves to be Taiwanese or Chinese and Chart 5.4 tracks the changes in their responses between 1992 and 2018.

**Chart 5.4 Changes in the Taiwanese/Chinese identity of Taiwanese (1992-2018)**

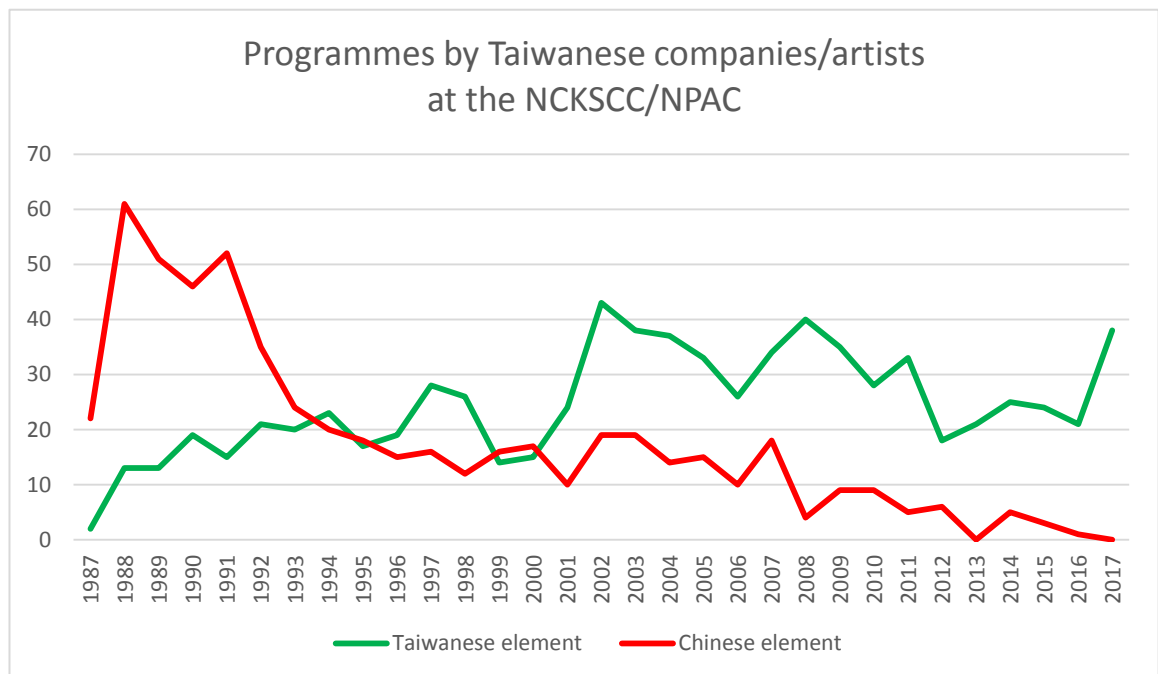


Source: The Election Study Centre of National Cheng-Chi University.

In 1992, 46.4% of Taiwanese people regarded themselves to be both Taiwanese and Chinese, while 25.5% regarded themselves to be Chinese and 17.6 % regarded themselves to be Taiwanese. By 1995 the situation had changed and now 25% regarded themselves to be Taiwanese, 20.7% regarded themselves to be Chinese and as many as 47% regarded themselves to be both Taiwanese and Chinese. By 2008, it had dramatically changed again and now 48.4 % regarded themselves to be Taiwanese, 43.1% regarded themselves to be both Taiwanese and Chinese, and the figure for solely Chinese identity was down to 4%.

Is this change in Taiwanese people's view of themselves reflected in the programmes at the NCKSCC? Chart 5.5 extracts the Taiwanese and Chinese element programmes from Table 5.1 for comparison with Chart 5.4.

**Chart 5.5 Programmes by Taiwanese companies/artists at the NCKSCC/NPAC (1987-2017)**



Source: own compilation from Table 5.1.

As discussed above (p.238), there was a crossing point in 1993 when Taiwanese element programmes began to form the majority following the decline in Chinese element programmes that started in 1991. Between 1993 and 1995 there was little difference between the two categories, but thereafter, Taiwanese element programmes have consistently and increasingly outstripped Chinese. This correlates with Chart 5.4 which also shows 1995 as the year when Taiwanese and Chinese identity crossed over. There is a remarkable similarity between the way the graphs in the two charts have subsequently moved.

To conclude, the shift from Chinese to Taiwanese outlined above is striking. But it is a broad-brush analysis which masks interesting smaller-scale issues. One such is the precise distinction between Taiwanese and Chinese elements. If Chinese music (national music, *Guo yue*, 國樂) is counted as ‘Chinese’ in the analysis, it can be distinguished from ‘Taiwanese’ music which is a term that normally refers to Min-nan and Hakka folk songs, and Nan guan and Bei guan music. But such music was also originally Chinese having been taken to Taiwan from China in one of the earlier waves of immigration some centuries in the past.

In the same way, some forms of Taiwanese theatre such as glove puppetry and shadow puppetry, that are nowadays seen as traditional, were also introduced to Taiwan from China, the only difference between them and Chinese element Peking Opera and Bangzi Opera is the date of their arrival. So, are they Taiwanese or Chinese? These days, when Taiwanese performing arts companies tour China with programmes that include Chinese (Peking) opera and Chinese music they are regarded as ‘Taiwanese’ companies and this is reinforced by the fact that they display Taiwanese characters (Li, interview of 27 June 2018). In the opinion of Lin Hwai-min, the founder of the Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan and a

national cultural icon in Taiwan, such ‘Chinese elements’ should be considered part of Taiwanese culture:

Chinese opera and the National Palace Museum are both part of Taiwan! Over the years, they have become native Taiwanese. This is what it is! It would be very foolish to push them away. (Lin, interview of 25 May 2016, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Chien Wen-pin, former National Symphony Orchestra Music Director (2001-2007) and current Artistic Director to the NPAC’s Weiwuying says that it is important to consider the connection between the programmes and the ‘land of Taiwan’ where the performers or artists were born and grew up. In defining ‘Taiwanese programmes’, he stresses:

As long as the productions and programmes are created by Taiwanese, then they can be called Taiwanese programmes, even if their genre is Western (e.g. symphony, play) or Chinese (e.g. Chinese opera, Chinese music). The way that Taiwanese artists create, interpret or perform is instinctively different from that of artists of different nationalities and that is why they are ‘Taiwanese’. (Chien, interview of 1 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

This dilemma is one of definition and pigeon-holing rather than anything to do with the programmes themselves. These are constant, and any inconsistency is in the minds of the people who are attempting to interpret them.

Taiwanese culture and indigenous culture used to be regarded as part of a single large ‘invented’ family of cultures under the umbrella term Chinese culture (see Section 2.3.1.2). But nowadays this ‘imagination’ has shifted and Chinese (*Zhonghua*) culture is regarded as just one component, albeit a dominant one, of Taiwan’s diverse culture. Jung Shu-hwa, an Assistant Professor at the Taipei National University of the Arts, and also a theatre scholar and regular consultant to government cultural organisations, articulates a more nuanced view:

Taiwanese deals with a broad area which shows huge diversity. Politics, especially political parties, play a vital role. The differing ideologies of the KMT and DPP each influence Taiwanese identity in their own distinct way. Although disadvantaged groups such as indigenous people and new migrants are well recognised, they still need more attention from the Government. Every culture of Taiwan should be identified as a cultural identity rather than being lumped together into a single cultural identity. Toleration of and respect for difference is both essential and crucial. (Jung, interview of 11 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Taiwanese identity is therefore, in Hall's (1996) sense 'becoming' in a striking way that is based on its radical historicisation and constant transformation.

### **5.3 Case Studies of the NCKSCC's Programmes**

The NCKSCC has in the past created some of its own theatre productions, such as *Red Nose* (1989), but since it had only a single resident company until 2005 (the National Symphony Orchestra), it mainly produced classical music programmes. As part of the investigation into whether there has been a shift in identity in the NCKSCC's produced and presented programmes during the 31 years of its existence, this section takes a series of case studies to explore in more detail the relationship between programming and the shift in Taiwanese identity, and the response of the people responsible for programming to the task they have been set. Three case studies are chosen to exemplify the way in which the 'becoming' of Taiwanese identity is expressed differently and distinctively, depending on the type of performing arts organisations. This qualitative approach contributes supplementary information to reinforce the research findings from the quantitative analysis in Section 5.2.

The first case study looks at NCKSCC's own series of 'Flagship Productions' of dance, theatre and music created either by Taiwanese companies or through international collaboration. These productions give a direct reflection of the way the

Centre's programming developed, including its interaction concerning the transformation of Taiwan's social environment, along with its changing identity.

The second case study examines one of the programmes that the NCKSCC co-presented with a privately-owned associate company. It explores the work of the contemporary dance company, Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan which was founded in 1973 by choreographer Lin Hwai-min and has been an associate company of the NCKSCC since the Centre's launch in 1987. Observing and analysing Cloud Gate's work at the NCKSCC gives an opportunity to show how changes in Taiwanese identity are evident in co-commissioned programming.

The third case study looks at programmes that the NCKSCC co-presented with a government-owned associate company. Taiwan's Chinese Opera company, the Guo Guang Opera Company, was established in 1995 when several military Chinese Opera troupes merged. Since the NCKSCC's opening, performances by military Chinese Opera troupes have played an important part in its programmes, and when the Guo Guang Opera Company was formed, it became an associate company to the NCKSCC with annual productions. Through analysing Guo Guang's programmes at the NCKSCC, it is possible to probe the unique situation of Chinese Opera in Taiwan and also to correlate variations in Guo Guang's programmes with changes in Taiwanese identity

### **5.3.1 Case Study One: the NCKSCC's Flagship Productions**

The NCKSCC's programme of 'Flagship Productions' ran from 2008 until 2014, although the name was changed to 'Annual Productions' in 2012. During that time a total of nine productions appeared.

When the DPP came to power in Taiwan in 2000 it appointed Tchen Yu-chiou as

its first Minister of the Council of Cultural Affairs. She was responsible for the publication of the second culture white paper (2004) which set out government cultural policy for Taiwanese identity and, in particular, celebrated the cultural diversity of the country (Cultural White Paper, 2004). Tchen's term of office as Minister ended in 2004 and some years later in 2007, she was appointed to the Chair of the NCKSCC's Board, a post she held until 2010. Tchen was the key person in the initiation of the Flagship Productions series, as she explains:

On my arrival at the NCKSCC, I felt that the programme of events produced by any performing arts centre should be its 'soul'. But at that time, the NCKSCC's only resident company was the NSO; there were no resident theatre or dance companies. In my opinion, it was vital for the NCKSCC to be able to present its own productions that displayed a strong Taiwanese identity and provided events suitable for every sector of Taiwanese society. The programme should be inclusive as regards age, gender, ethnicity, and social status. (Tchen, interview of 27 November 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Tchen saw it as her task to help establish a Taiwanese identity through the work of the NCKSCC and that the best way to encourage such an identity is to make people feel proud of their national culture. This, then, would be the work of the Centre. This is also evidence of how government cultural policy affects the Centre's programming through artistic decisions and the vision of the Chairman of the Centre, which was discussed in Chapter 4.

Huang Pen-ting, NCKSCC Programme Manager (2014-2016), was the Assistant Manager of Programming in 2008 and was involved with the set-up of the Flagship Production series. She explains that the series aimed to demonstrate to the world at large Taiwan's ability to be recognised as a cultural centre of excellence of international standing. Extrapolating from the core value of 'native fashion', the project focused on cross-border arts disciplines, international collaboration and the

creation of pioneering work in directing Taiwan's performing arts development (Huang, interview of 3 July 2018). The Centre was allocated substantial finance and manpower to allow it to produce exemplary productions. Objectives of the programme included:

- (1) Long term planning that allowed enough time for the development of excellent productions.
- (2) The concept of international collaboration that went beyond merely inviting international companies to perform in Taiwan by enabling discussion, communication, collaboration, and innovation between Taiwanese and international artists and this encouraging genuine international exchange.
- (3) The development of a concept of 'Taiwaneseness' (*Taiwan shing*, 台灣性) that celebrated the cultural diversity of the people of Taiwan and promoted the creation of productions at a level of sophistication that would allow international recognition and promotion on the world stage.
- (4) The establishment of a Taiwanese brand that has an evident core of traditional Taiwanese culture but nevertheless is of its own modern time. The ultimate aim is to develop an internationally recognised presence in arts and culture for Taiwan, and thereby to set up milestones for Taiwan's new generation. (NCKSCC, 2010: 54)

These ambitious objectives are similar to those of another initiative launched by Tchen, the 'Image of Taiwan' series (see Section 5.2.1) but with an added international emphasis.

The aim of the project was thus to make 'Taiwaneseness' the predominant motif in the NCKSCC's programme planning. The key features are generous finance, international collaboration and a strong presence of Taiwanese elements, reflecting Taiwan's realisation that its diplomatic isolation made 'global and international' an essential strategy for Taiwan's survival. Tchen's understanding of this political strategy led to the creation of the Flagship Productions series and demonstrates that by 2008 'Taiwaneseness' was to be seen as broad and internationalised rather than defensive and isolated.



**Table 5.2. The NCKSCC's Flagship Productions**

No	Name	Year	Genre	Collaboration	Element	Note
1	<i>Mackay-The Black Bearded Bible Man</i>	2008	Opera	Taiwanese team with German director and, American and Korean tenors.	Taiwanese story of a Canadian missionary in Taiwan.	The first Flagship Production.
2	<i>Orlando</i>	2009	Theatre	Taiwanese team with American director, set design and lighting design.	Adapted from Virginia Woolf's work, played by a Taiwanese Chinese Opera diva in a contemporary way.	
3	<i>Song of Pensive Beholding</i>	2009	Dance	Taiwanese dance company, Legendary Lin Dance Theatre.	Contemporary dance inspired by Taiwanese ritual culture.	
4	<i>The Grand Voyage</i>	2010	Theatre	Taiwanese team with American director, and musicians.	The story of a Chinese adventurer played by a Taiwanese theatre company, a Taiwanese opera diva, and an American jazz musician.	
5	<i>On the Road</i>	2010	Musical	Taiwanese team.	Taiwanese indigenous story.	
6	<i>La Dame aux Camélias</i>	2011	Musical	Taiwanese and Japanese team with Japanese director.	Based on the work of Alexandre Dumas fils and played by Taiwanese and Japanese actors with Taiwanese pop songs.	
7	<i>YogeeTi</i>	2012	Dance	Taiwanese and French team with French choreographer.	New creation with field research in Taiwan. Title is the Taiwanese word for 'organism'.	Project name changed to Annual Production.
8	<i>Fall for Eileen Chang</i>	2013	Musical	Taiwanese team with German and	Adapted from work of overseas Chinese writer, Eileen Chang	Project name changed to

				Taiwanese composers.		Annual Production
9	<i>Crystal Boys</i>	2014	Theatre	Taiwanese team.	Based on Chinese/Taiwanese writer Pai Hsien-yung's work.	Project name changed to Annual Production.

Source: own compilation from the NCKSCC programmes data

Table 5. 2 shows the nine Flagship Productions and the range of cooperation modes that were used in the Project. Based on the type of cooperation, the Flagship Productions can be divided into two groups:

**(1) International collaboration:**

- *Mackay—The Black Bearded Bible Man* (2008) was a new opera by Taiwanese composer, Chin Shi-wen with elements of Taiwanese folksong and indigenous music. The first flagship production was a three-hour opera directed by German director Lukas Hemleb, telling the story of the Canadian missionary George Leslie Mackay (1844-1901) who arrived in Taiwan in 1871 and died there in 1901. The production is about his time in Taiwan, and is immediately recognisable as Taiwanese in character (NCKSCC, 2010: 56), which means that it would not have been staged during the period of authoritarian rule. It was a huge production in terms of the stage set and the number of performers, including the National Symphony Orchestra and a chorus. It is claimed to be the ‘first opera in the world to be sung in Taiwanese and English’ (NCKSCC, 2008). The world premiere staging ran for four performances at the National Theatre in Taipei.
- *Orlando* (2009) was a play based on Virginia Woolf's novel in a version by playwright Darryl Pinckney. This production is an Asian version by the noted ‘image of theatre’ American director, Robert Wilson featuring his trademark theatre style. *Orlando* had German (Jutta Lampe, 1989), French (Isabelle Huppert,

1993) and English (Miranda Richardson, 1996) versions before the Taiwanese version was staged (Hsieh, 2012: 145). It was a solo performance under Wilson's dominating direction played in a contemporary way featuring Chinese Opera chant by Taiwanese Chinese Opera diva Wei Hai-min. *Orlando* was a collaboration with Guo Guang Opera Company and had eight performances at the National Theatre in Taipei.

- *The Grand Voyage* (2010) was also directed by Robert Wilson, but co-created with U Theatre's Artistic Director, Liu Ruo-yu. The story concerns the Chinese Ming dynasty court eunuch, Zheng He (1371–1433) who was well known as a marine explorer who undertook seven voyages to Southeast Asia, South Asia, and East Africa. U Theatre players made up the main component of the production along with a narration by the Taiwanese Opera diva, Tang Mei-yun and the American jazz musician, Dickie Landry (NCKSCC, 2010: 62). *The Grand Voyage* had eight performances at the National Theatre in Taipei.
- *La Dame aux Camélias* (2011) was directed by the renowned Japanese director, Suzuki Tadashi and featured Taiwanese performers along with some of Suzuki's actors. Suzuki was responsible for the script, lighting and set design in collaboration with a Taiwanese team. Taiwanese songs formed the main part of the production which was played at the National Theatre in Taipei and then toured to Kaohsiung. However, the artistic interpretation of *La Dame aux Camélias* aroused controversy at its premiere because of potential intercultural misconceptions<sup>24</sup> and the NCKSCC had to hold an official symposium at which

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<sup>24</sup> According to the report by journalist, Wang Yi-ru of the *China Times*, the controversy arose from differing views about musicals, opera and drama between Japanese Director Suzuki Tadashi and the Taiwanese performing arts circle in terms of how the director combined elements of this French story with Taiwanese pop songs under his signature 'Suzuki Method of Actor Training'. The Taiwanese performing arts circle also questioned whether the NCKSCC should spend a substantial amount of money on this kind of production by inviting renowned international directors (China Times, 2011).

the issues were debated with prominent individuals from the Taiwanese arts world to settle the dispute. As a result, the name 'Flagship Production' was changed to 'Annual Production' from 2012.

- *YogeeTi* (2012): this dance production has a Taiwanese name that translates as 'organism'. It was choreographed by Mourad Merzouki, the Artistic Director of the French dance company, Compagnie Kafig and combined contemporary and street dance. It was inspired by the Taiwanese fashion designer, Johan Ku, who was also the costume designer for the production. The dancers were from Compagnie Kafig along with local Taiwanese dancers. *YogeeTi* played in Taipei and Kaohsiung, but then also toured internationally for more than 100 performances. However, according to the NCKSCC's former Programme Manager, Huang Pen-ting who was in charge of *YogeeTi*, the international tours were arranged by Compagnie Kafig rather than by the NCKSCC (Huang, interview of 3 July 2018).
- *Fall for Eileen Chang* (2013): this production was initiated by the NCKSCC's Artistic Director, Huang Pi-twan. It was inspired by the work of the overseas Chinese writer Eileen Chang, and involved German composer Christian Jost, as well as the Taiwanese composer Chung Yao-kuang. It was directed by Taiwanese Director Li Huan-hsiun and performed by Taiwanese artists with the National Symphony Orchestra. It only played a single performance at the National Concert Hall in Taipei (Huang, interview of 3 July 2018).

## **(2) Taiwanese team:**

- *Song of Pensive Beholding* (2009) was choreographed by Lin Li-chen in her signature theatre style inspired by Taiwanese ritual culture, and performed by her Legend Lin Dance Theatre. *Song of Pensive Beholding* has toured to France, Russia, Mexico, and Japan (NCKSCC, 2010: 60).

- *On the Road* (2010) was a musical inspired by Taiwanese indigenous music, mostly from the Puyuma tribe. It is a multi-media musical performed by the National Symphony Orchestra along with indigenous singers. *On the Road* has toured to Kaohsiung and Taitung in Taiwan and also to Hong Kong (NCKSCC, 2010: 64).
- *Crystal Boys* (2014): this production was based on a work by the Chinese/Taiwanese writer Pai Hsien-yung and tells of the lives of homosexual men in Taipei in the 1970s. It was directed by the Taiwanese director, Tsai Ruei-yuan and performed by Taiwanese actors. The production was staged in Taipei and Kaohsiung (Huang, interview of 3 July 2018).

### **Observations**

At the 2008 initiation of the NCKSCC's Flagship Production Project, Taiwaneseeness was already a recognised characteristic of Taiwanese identity and it therefore aimed at international recognition by inviting acclaimed international directors and artists to work with Taiwanese artists, and thereby enhance the brand of Taiwan. Interestingly, any enhancement gained was appreciated mainly by the Taiwanese population itself, rather than more general acknowledgement by people outside Taiwan, apart from the invited artists.

Between 2008 and 2014, as Assistant Manager in the Programming Department, the author of this thesis was personally involved in all the Flagship Productions mentioned above and was able to see at first-hand how working with international artists influenced the awareness and creative results of local staff. A colleague of the author of this thesis, Huang Pen-ting, another Assistant Programme Manager during this period, was in overall charge of all nine productions and recalls that when new projects were initiated at the NCKSCC they were normally conceived at the highest

level by the Chairman/Chairwoman and Artistic Directors along with their personal artistic networks. The result, as shown in Table 5.2, is that ‘the choice of programmes regularly reflected the individual preferences of those senior people in terms of their artistic tastes and their social or political sensitivity’ (Huang, interview of 3 July 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author). This is how *Mackay—The Black Bearded Bible Man* and *On the Road* were chosen to represent Taiwanese contemporary opera and indigenous music.

Initiation through the individual choice of senior managers was one significant programming approach for the Flagship Productions. According to Huang, the other approach was for artists to make proposals which were then evaluated by the NCKSCC. Examples of this are *Song of Pensive Beholding* by Legend Lin Dance Theatre and *The Grand Voyage* by U Theatre. Regarding international collaboration, Huang Pen-ting explains that when international directors were invited to work on NCKSCC projects, the Centre always asked them to come to Taiwan in advance of their work so that they had time to undertake field research. The hope was that they would familiarise themselves with Taiwanese life and culture, and then use that appreciation to inspire their work for the NCKSCC. Nevertheless, the directors’ artistic decisions were always respected, and that is how *Orlando* and *La Dame aux Camélias* were born. Huang described the working process as ‘complicated yet organic’, and the eventual results quite often differed from the original expectations. Working with respected international artists allowed the Taiwanese collaborators to absorb new influences that would form the basis of a new cultural awareness within the Taiwanese arts world (Huang, interview of 3 July 2018).

Liu Chiung-shu, NCKSCC Artistic Director (2008-2010), when asked about the source materials for the programme, commented that the mission was to bring international strength to Taiwanese productions based on Taiwanese elements. In her

view, it is important to showcase every aspect of the ability of the performing arts in Taiwan so it should not make any difference whether the subject chosen is Taiwanese or not. For example, Zhang He, the main character of the story of *The Grand Voyage*, is Chinese; *Orlando* is based on the English writer Virginia Woolf's work, and *La Dame aux Camélias* is originally written by the French author, Alexandre Dumas fils. None of these are Taiwanese subjects, but they were selected because their realisation for the stage involved Taiwanese creativity. Liu claims that if programming was restricted to exclusively Taiwanese work or subjects it would be limited and narrow-minded, and would encourage an isolationist approach to creative work. In addition, from a practical point of view, if international touring is an objective then it is imperative that the subjects of the Flagship Productions are recognised worldwide so that international presenters are keen to invite the productions to their theatres or festivals. It is vital to have well recognised subjects on offer if the idea is to attract co-production with international theatre companies. For example, *The Grand Voyage* drew attention from Singapore's Esplanade Theatre on the Bay which was interested in making a co-production because Zhang He's story is well known in Singapore (Liu, interview of 25 May 2018).

Programme Manager, Huang Pen-ting agreed with this and stressed that the source materials must fit closely with Taiwanese people's life, reflect their stories and remind them of their memories so that the productions can evoke the audience's interest. That is how *Fall for Eileen Chang* and *Crystal Boys* were planned, despite the fact that they were based on the works of overseas Chinese and mainland Taiwanese writers. Both are familiar and well-loved writers in Taiwan, and this is more important than where they happen to be living. These productions were popular in Taiwan but had limited international appeal, probably restricted to Chinese-speaking areas (Huang, interview of 3 July 2018).

Another production worthy of note in the Annual Production series was *Crystal Boys* which focused on homosexuality. The NCKSCC, its Board and Artistic Directors were clearly open to themes related to the contemporary understanding of Taiwan as a diverse society and demonstrated that Taiwanese identity nowadays embraces elements of cultural diversity apart from ethnicity. Thus indigenous, Western or new immigrant cultures are represented, but also gender, sexuality, religion, disability, age, and economic background. This aspect of the NCKSCC's programming is a good example of how today's multicultural Taiwanese identity can show the 'differences' within the 'similarities' in the imagined Taiwanese society (Hall, 1998) and in the process of the new Taiwanese identity's 'becoming', integration plays a vital role (Wintle, 1996).

### **Outcomes**

Analysis of the NCKSCC's Flagship Productions series shows that enormous amounts of money and energy were expended, but that results did not live up to expectations, especially in terms of international touring, enhancing the Taiwan brand, or developing cross-border relationships. For example, six out of the nine Flagship Productions only toured within Taiwan or ended after a world premiere at the NCKSCC. Yang Chi-wen, NCKSCC Artistic Director (2007-2008), commented that in responding to government policy, it is not enough for the NCKSCC to take the leading role in the performing arts in Taiwan, even though this is one of its functions. It must also take a leading role in international promotion of Taiwanese productions, and by extension its culture. Yang adds that the Flagship Production series was allocated a very large budget, but in hindsight needed more detailed, sounder advance planning carried out by professionals with expertise in this field if it was to achieve its aim of providing an international showcase for Taiwanese culture. Because it was a new venture, the Flagship



Production series was something of an experiment which had targets that were hard to achieve. People were aware that the series might fail in its early stages, but that if failure was repeated, it would be necessary to investigate the reasons and propose solutions (Yang, interview of 14 June 2018).

This may explain the negative reaction of the arts circle to *La Dame aux Camélias* in 2011 when the NCKSCC was asked to justify the large amount of money it spent on grandiose international projects that enhanced the reputation of internationally renowned directors, but did not look after the interests of local companies and artists.

Did the Flagship Production series boost the reputation and pockets of international directors and artists as it promoted ‘intercultural theatre’<sup>25</sup> works, while at the same time developing a specifically Taiwanese identity? Did the international directors spend enough time to gain a proper understanding of Taiwanese culture or did they misunderstand and misinterpret it? In the opinion of Taiwanese theatre scholar, Tuan Hsin-chun, in both *Orlando* and *The Grand Voyage*, the results of ‘cross-borders’ and ‘representation’ were superficial, with the dominant impression still being of Robert Wilson’s trade mark ‘theatre of image’. The other elements such as Chinese Opera in *Orlando* or oriental legendry in *The Grand Voyage* all appeared to be secondary (Tuan, 2012: 40). This argument then carried on in *La Dame aux Camélias*. However, there is always a hierarchy in the theatre and in the production of flagship shows. If renowned artists such as Robert Wilson or Suzuki Tadashi play a central role in a production, their charisma and authority will always result in a show that appears to be ‘their’ creation. The NCKSCC may have claimed that it was the producer in these

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<sup>25</sup> Patrice Pavis in his *The Intercultural Performance Reader* defines 5 modes of intercultural theatre: (1) Denial of Cultural Anchoring; (2) Rapprochement; (3) Seduction, imitation, exchange; (4) Renewed betrayal or productive misinterpretation; and (5) Appropriation (cited in Tuan, 2012: 41-43).

productions, but they themselves admitted that they would always ‘respect the artistic decision’ in the end. Theatre scholar, Daphne P. Lei, referred to such an arrangement as ‘hegemonic intercultural theatre’<sup>26</sup> (Lei, 2011:571).

If the concept of Taiwanese-ness had been accepted and taken into the national awareness by 2008, it followed that seeking international recognition for Taiwanese cultural achievements became the new subject for programming. Although it was not necessary for every Flagship Production to achieve this aim, Yang Chi-wen, NCKSCC Artistic Director (2007-2008) stresses:

It was seen as important to stimulate Taiwan’s performing arts by bringing in new ideas, concepts and imagination. Introducing international virtuosi to Taiwan not only provides the opportunity to observe and emulate, but also inspires Taiwanese artists. This may not be a speedy process, but in time the influence would gradually take root. (Yang, interview of 14 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

Yet although bringing producers and artists to Taiwan may enhance Taiwan’s cultural life and show its creative people what is happening internationally, gaining international recognition for Taiwan in the field of artistic achievement is another matter that depends on taking Taiwanese creations abroad to demonstrate what it can do. The Flagship Production series had little success in this regard.

As mentioned above, the Artistic Director is the key person in programming. After the era of the Flagship Production series, a new Artistic Director had different thoughts about how to support Taiwanese companies and artists by using the budget to commission a wider range of productions rather than focusing on one or two flagship

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<sup>26</sup> According to Lei (2011: 571), hegemonic intercultural theatre is ‘a specific artistic genre and state of mind that combines First World capital and brainpower with Third World raw material and labour, also Western classical texts with Eastern performance traditions. Well-known practitioners of ‘Hegemonic Intercultural Theatre’ include Peter Brook, Ariane Mnouchkine, and Richard Schechner, as well as their Eastern counterparts Suzuki Tadashi of Japan, and the Contemporary Legend Theatre of Taiwan’.

productions. The Flagship Project finally ended in 2014.

### **5.3.2 Case Study Two: the Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan**

Founded by writer and choreographer, Lin Hwai-min in 1973, the Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan was named after ‘the oldest known dance in China’ (*Yun men*, 雲門). The company is the ‘first contemporary dance company in the greater Chinese-speaking community’ and probably the most internationally toured Taiwanese performing arts company (Cloud Gate Dance Theatre, 2016). The founder and Artistic Director, Lin Hwai-min is one of the most influential cultural figures in Taiwan, and the evolution of Cloud Gate’s works ‘essentially follow the trace of Lin Hwai-min’s pursuance of cultural identity reflecting Taiwan’s cultural identity shift from Chinese to multi-cultural Taiwanese’ (Encyclopedia of Taiwan, 2019).

In his book *Bright Eyes on the Heights*, Lin describes how he started his career by learning contemporary dance in New York and at the same time formulating the idea of a specifically ‘Chinese’ contemporary dance. At that time, because the official name of Taiwan was the Republic of China, rather than thinking in terms of ‘Taiwaneseness’ as we might do today, Lin automatically thought in terms of ‘Chineseness’. Lin was as shocked and angry as the rest of the Taiwanese population when in 1971, the United Nations voted to replace Taiwan’s ROC government as the representative of China with mainland China’s PRC. Lin recalled how he suddenly had to figure out ‘who I am’ with a great feeling of nostalgia. He decided to return to Taiwan, where he founded Cloud Gate with the ambition of presenting works ‘composed by Chinese, choreographed by Chinese, danced by Chinese, and for a Chinese audience’ (Lin, 2010: 26; Encyclopedia of Taiwan, 2019).

The development of Cloud Gate is also closely linked with Taiwan’s cultural

policy of supporting the performing arts. Kuo Wei-fan, CCA Minister (1988-1993), recalled that when the Government subsidy system was initiated, Cloud Gate was the key factor. He remembered how Lin Hwai-min, after many years of running the company with very little financial or other support, became so disenchanted that in 1988 he decided to disband Cloud Gate. Kuo was CCA Minister at that time, and was instrumental in rescuing Cloud Gate by setting up a scheme to offer substantial financial support to Taiwanese performing arts companies. After further discussion at the National Cultural Conference in 1991, the CCA constructed the *International Performance Troupe Cultivation Plan* in 1992, which evolved into the influential *Performing Arts Group's Development Foster Plan* in 1998 (see Section 4.2.2.2 of Chapter 4). Subsidising Taiwanese performing arts companies in this way was eventually extended and became part of the national cultural policy. Cloud Gate still receives an annual grant from the Government (Kuo, interview of 28 June 2018).

Lin's work with Cloud Gate was at a low ebb in 1987, the year that the NCKSCC opened and this meant that it did not appear at the Centre until 1991, when it staged a come-back with its 1986 work *My Nostalgia, My Songs* and premiered the 1989 work *Requiem* at the National Theatre. According to Lee Huey-mei (NCKSCC Artistic Director 2014-2018), since 1991 the Centre and Cloud Gate have built up a close partnership and the world premiere of every new work by Cloud Gate has taken place at the Centre ever since (Lee, interview of 7 December 2015). This special relationship between the national performing arts centre and a renowned subsidised performing arts company makes Cloud Gate a useful candidate for a case study in the relationship between programming and Taiwanese identity, starting from the beginning of that relationship in 1991.

**Table 5.3 Chronological list of works by the Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan  
(1973-2017)**

No	Year	Name	Choreographer	Content	NCKSCC involvement	Note
1	1973	<i>Landscape</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by American Chinese composer, Chou Wen-chung's work of Chinese poems.		Created during Lin's study in the US and became one of the company's opening programmes in Taichung, Taiwan.
2	1973	<i>Blind</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by Taiwanese Composer, Hsu Tsang-houi's Taipei impression of a blind masseur.		One of the company's opening programmes in Taichung, Taiwan.
3	1974	<i>Revenge of A Lonely Ghost</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Based on the Chinese Opera, <i>The Case of the Black Basin</i> .		
4	1974	<i>Han Shih</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Based on a story about the Warring States Period in Chinese history.		
5	1975	<i>The Tale of White Serpent</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Based on a Chinese folktale <i>Madam White Snake</i> .	Programmed in 1992.	
6	1978	<i>Legacy</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Describing how Taiwanese ancestors crossed the Taiwan Strait to settle in Taiwan.	Programmed in 2003 as 30 <sup>th</sup> anniversary work.	
7	1979	<i>Liao Tien Ting</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Based on a Taiwanese folktale about the Japanese colonial period.		
8	1982	<i>Nirvana</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by a Buddhist text.	Programmed in 2000.	
9	1982	<i>Street Game</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by the city of concrete buildings and the people who live there.		
10	1983	<i>The Dream of Red Chamber</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by Chinese writer Cao Xue-qin's work <i>The Dream of the Red Chamber</i> .	Programmed in 1994, 1997 and 2005.	10 <sup>th</sup> anniversary work.
11	1984	<i>Rite of Spring, Taipei, 1984</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by the chaos during the process of Taiwan's modernisation.		
12	1984	<i>Adagietto</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Using music from Gustav Mahler's 5 <sup>th</sup> symphony.		

13	1985	<i>Dreamscape</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Showing artist's courage to face the desolation and complexity.		
14	1986	<i>My Nostalgia, My Songs</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Using Taiwanese pop songs to describe the life of Taiwanese young men who come to Taipei to pursue their dreams.	Programmed in 1991 for Cloud Gate's come-back.	
15	1989	<i>Requiem</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Created after the Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing, China on 4 June 1989.	Programmed in 1991 for Cloud Gate's come-back.	
16	1993	<i>Nine Songs</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by ancient Chinese poet, Qu Yuan's work <i>Nine Songs</i> , with Taiwanese indigenous and other Asian music.	Commissioned and premiered. Programmed in 1997, 2007, and 2012.	20 <sup>th</sup> anniversary work.
17	1994	<i>Rice Grains</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by the features of rice, and this work became the predecessor of <i>Song of Wanderers</i> in the same year.		
18	1994	<i>The Rite of Spring</i>	Helen Lai	Inviting Hong Kong Choreographer to create the work for the Company and inspired by Russian composer Igor Stravinsky's same name work.		
19	1994	<i>Songs of Wanderers</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Based on Hermann Hesse's work <i>Siddhartha</i> with music of Georgian folk songs.	Commissioned and premiered. Programmed in 2002, 2010, and 2013.	
20	1994	<i>Cocoon</i>	Lo Man-fei	Using Phillip Glass's music	Originally created in 1987 and programmed in 1994.	Lo Man-fei was a dancer of the Cloud Gate and became the Artistic Director of the Cloud Gate 2 in 1999.
21	1995	<i>Invisible City</i>	Helen Lei	Inviting Hong Kong Choreographer to create the work for the Company and inspired by Mexican painter Frida Kahlo's life.		
22	1996	<i>Frida</i>	Helen Lei	Inviting Hong Kong Choreographer to create the work	Presented in 1996.	

				for the Company and inspired by Italian writer Italo Calvino's same name novel.		
23	1996	<i>Le Vie en rose</i>	Helen Lei	Inviting Hong Kong Choreographer to create the work for the Company and inspired by French singer Edith Piaf's songs and life.	Presented in 1996.	
24	1997	<i>Portrait of the Families</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Using old Taiwanese photos and oral history to tell Taiwanese stories.	Commissioned and premiered. Programmed in 2000 and 2011.	
25	1998	<i>Moon Water</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by Buddhist texts using tai-chi approach.	Commissioned and premiered. Programmed in 2000.	
26	1999	<i>Burning the Juniper Branches</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by Tibetan ritual.	Commissioned and premiered. Programmed in 2002.	
27	2001	<i>Bamboo Dream</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Expressing the dreamy and impermanent life.	Commissioned and premiered.	
28	2001	<i>Cursive</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by calligraphy exploring the oriental aesthetic and traditional movement. The first piece of the <i>Cursive Trilogy</i> .	Commissioned and premiered. Programmed in 2009 as <i>Cursive : A Trilogy</i> .	
29	2002	<i>Smoke</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by Marcel Proust's work <i>À la recherche du temps perdu</i> .	Commissioned and premiered. Programmed in 2015.	
30	2003	<i>Cursive II</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by calligraphy exploring the beauty of Song Dynasty china. Music by John Cage. The second piece of the <i>Cursive: A Trilogy</i> .	Commissioned and premiered. Programmed in 2009 as <i>Cursive : A Trilogy</i> .	
31	2004	<i>On the Heights</i>	Wu kuo-chu	Expressing deep loneliness.	Commissioned and premiered.	
32	2004	<i>The Road to the Mountain</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Based on Taiwanese writer, Chen Ying-zhen's works.	Commissioned and premiered.	
33	2005	<i>Wild Cursive</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by calligraphy. The last piece of the <i>Cursive: A Trilogy</i> .	Commissioned and premiered. Programmed in 2009 as <i>Cursive : A Trilogy</i> .	

34	2006	<i>White</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Consisting of three pieces with endless white on stage.	Commissioned and premiered.	
35	2006	<i>Wind Shadow</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Collaboration with overseas Chinese artist, Cai Guo-qiang.	Commissioned and premiered.	
36	2007	<i>Lost Shadows</i>	Akram Khan (British choreographer)	The concept is about ending	Presented.	With Cloud Gate 2.
37	2007	<i>Oculus</i>	Wu kuo-chu	Oculus means 'eye' in Latin. The piece is about light and hope	Presented.	With Cloud Gate 2.
38	2008	<i>Whispers of Flowers</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by the company's tour in Portugal, seeing a great flowering tree and recalling the image in the book of <i>The Dream of Red Chamber</i> .	Commissioned and premiered.	35 <sup>th</sup> anniversary work.
39	2010	<i>Listening to the River</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by Taiwan's Tam-sui River, also concerning the typhoon disaster in Taiwan.	Commissioned and premiered.	
40	2010	<i>Water Stains on the Wall</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by calligraphy.	Commissioned and premiered.	
41	2011	<i>How Can I Live on Without You</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by Taiwanese pop songs.	Commissioned and premiered.	
42	2013	<i>Rice</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by the life cycle of rice in Chihshang, Taitung, Taiwan.	Commissioned and premiered.	40 <sup>th</sup> anniversary work.
43	2014	<i>White Water/Dust</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by Taiwan's Li-wu River.	Commissioned and premiered.	
44	2017	<i>Formosa</i>	Lin Hwai-min	Inspired by the island of Taiwan.	Commissioned and premiered.	

Source: own compilation from Cloud Gate's chronological work and NCKSCC programme data.

Table 5.3 lists the programmes of the Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan since the company's first performance in 1973, showing when its association with the NCKSCC began in 1991. Although the main focus is the Company's work at the National Theatre, it is instructive to list the Company's early works as some were later programmed at the National Theatre.



## Observations

As Lin Hwai-min was the founder and artistic director of Cloud Gate, it is not surprising that Table 5.3 emphasises his key role there. He choreographed 37 out of the 44 works listed.

In 2005, the Council of Cultural Affairs hosted the 'Lin Hwai-min International Dance Conference' where the dance scholar Chao Yu-ling presented a paper that analysed Cloud Gate/Lin Hwai-min's works from 1973 to 1997 in relation to Taiwanese identity and demonstrated how Cloud Gate's concept and style have evolved during that time and how Taiwanese dance scholars and critics, such as Chan Hung-chi, Hang Chi and Lu Ching-yi have identified three periods of development in Cloud Gate's work between 1973 and 1985. Based on Chan Hung-chi's classification<sup>27</sup> there was a Chinese period, a Taiwanese period and a period with diverse characteristics (Chao, 2005: 7). However, Cloud Gate's work is not all mono-cultural so that, for example, *Nine Songs* (1993) was inspired by ancient Chinese poet Qu Yuan's work, while the music is from indigenous Taiwanese and other Asian cultures. Although it is possible to identify three kinds of work in Cloud Gate's oeuvre, they do not follow a strictly chronological sequence. For example, *Blind* (1973), inspired by Taiwanese Composer Hsu Tsang-hou's Taipei impression of a blind masseur, was created during Chan's 'Chinese period' whereas *The Dream of Red Chamber* (1983), inspired by Chinese writer Cao Xue-qin's (曹雪芹) work of the same name, was created in the 'various' period. Moreover, Chao (2005) also pointed out that Taiwanese theatre pioneer Wu Jing-jyi questioned the vagueness and ambiguity of the distinction

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<sup>27</sup> Chan Hung-chi divided Cloud Gate's works between 1973 and 1985 into three periods: first, a Chinese period (1973-1976) that integrates Chinese cultural tradition into contemporary dance; second, a Taiwanese period (1976-1982) where dances have Taiwanese vernacular themes; and third, the 'various' period (1982-1985) in which works of foreign composers and choreographers were performed without an insistence that they should relate to Chinese traditions (Chao, 2005: 7).

between Chinese and Taiwanese cultural elements, a difficulty which has also been apparent in the research reported in this thesis. This emphasises how important it is not to draw detailed conclusions from data that do not warrant detailed analysis. Chao Yu-ling also comments:

Chan noticed the cultural characteristics and the source ideas of the dance, but ignored other dance elements (such as costume, movement dynamics, choreographic structure, lighting, décor and props) that are crucial in the creation and presentation of the dance works. (Chao, 2005: 8)

Nevertheless, Chan's observation that there are three periods of development in Cloud Gate's work, and that these relate to changes in Taiwanese identity, holds good in general. During the early period, most of Lin Hwai-min's works were inspired by Chinese sources. *Revenge of A Lonely Ghost*, *Han Shih*, *The Tale of White Serpent*, *The Dream of Red Chamber*, *Nine Songs* are good examples that reflect his early determination to create Chinese contemporary dance. Later work drew inspiration from a wider range of sources.

Contemporary dance is an abstract, conceptual and philosophically-based genre and these characteristics are prominent in most of Lin's work. Thus, for example, some of his signature works mentioned in the Table 5.3 use Chinese symbols. Cloud Gate dancers are trained in traditional Chinese disciplines such as meditation, *qi gong* (氣功), and martial arts as well as modern dance and ballet (Cloud Gate Dance Theatre, 2016), and the combination of Chinese and internationally-based elements is characteristic of Lin's work.

In a similar way, Chinese (Peking) opera and calligraphy add to the distinctive charm of this very Taiwanese dance company. Lin has always kept his focus on Taiwan and draws attention in his work to historical events related to Taiwan. As examples, shortly after founding Cloud Gate, *Legacy* (1978) and *Liao Tien Ting* (1979)

were created. Subsequently, *My Nostalgia*, *My Songs* (1986), *Portrait of the Families* (1997), *The Road to the Mountain* (2004), *Listening to the River* (2010), *How Can I Live on Without You* (2011), *Rice* (2013) and *Formosa* (2017) track Taiwan's social development and reflect the artist's thoughts about his land. Lin has shown himself to be increasingly concerned to focus on Taiwan, especially over the last decade. In 2005, Chao Yu-ling claimed in the 'Lin Hwai-min International Dance Conference':

Cloud Gate's development of a unique contemporary dance style reflects Taiwanese culture through the transformation of dance. The company's repertoire is a synthesis of different ethno-cultural elements such as Chinese, Western, Taiwanese, Taiwanese indigenous, Japanese and other Asian cultures. (Chao: 2005: 6)

During my interview with him on 6 May 2015, Lin Hwai-min explained how he started Cloud Gate and how he created his works:

To establish Cloud Gate was my primary objective and I wanted to react to the culturally over-westernised Taiwan of the 1960s. My work is all about my personal development in trying to perceive and understand the place where I was born and grew up in an adult way that I would not have been able to do when I was a child. For me, the most important thing is that I care about my people, my audience and my place. (Lin, interview of 6 May 2015, translated from Mandarin by the author).

Although Lin did not put it this way, we can perceive how the development of his work runs parallel to the changes in Taiwanese life. The line of evolution in Lin's work is not a direct progression from Chinese to Taiwanese but instead, as Chao describes, more of a mix of different cultural elements. Lin feels that his creations are all about him, and his personal experiences and as Chao observes:

The evolution of Cloud Gate's repertoire in essence follows Lin Hwai-min's search for a cultural identity in a diasporic society. Lin began his search with a re-evaluation of the Chinese in Taiwan, and then a re-evaluation of Taiwanese culture... After clarifying his cultural identity, Lin Hwai-min

attempts to develop vocabularies that match the pulse of time. (Chao, 2005: 14)

In this way, Lin and other Taiwanese artists of his generation who were keen to create works ‘by Chinese’ and ‘for Chinese’ were making manifest the ‘imagining’ (Anderson, 2006) of a Chinese (*Zhonghua*) cultural identity in Taiwan. For Lin and other Taiwanese people like him, whether they were Han Taiwanese or second generation mainlanders, if they were neither born in mainland China nor even visited it as they grew up, the notion of ‘by Chinese’ or ‘for Chinese’ in reality came to mean ‘Taiwanese’. This was the origin of the concept of ‘Taiwanese’ as an identity in its own right.

### **5.3.3 Case Study Three: the Guo Guang Opera Company**

The Guo Guang (國光) Opera Company was established in 1995 as the sole national theatre company under the Ministry of Education in Taiwan. It had its origins in the Chinese Opera companies that belonged to the armed forces: Lu Guang (army), Da Peng (air force), and Hai Guang (navy). The Company was then transferred from the Ministry of Education to the Council of Cultural Affairs in 2008. (Guo Guang Opera Company, 2019). Wong Ah-chi, Artistic Director of Guo Guang, points out the significance of the separation of Guo Guang from the military which is ‘to detach from the political party (KMT) and military system and return to a cultural and educational structure’ (Wong, 2002: 130).

The Taiwanese theatre scholar Lin He-yi (2015) explains that Chinese Opera was a privileged genre when the KMT government transferred to Taiwan, and because many Chinese opera performers followed the KMT to Taiwan, its arrival swamped Taiwan’s existing traditional theatre scenario. With strong support from both the Government and the military who established their own Chinese Opera troupes and

schools, Chinese opera was very popular until the late 1970s when enthusiasm for different kinds of entertainment started to grow (Lin, 2015: 233-234). Because of this there was originally a proposal to build a ‘National Chinese Opera Theatre’ instead of a ‘National Theatre’ when the idea of establishing the NCKSCC was initiated (Hu, interview of 25 May 2018) and indeed, Chinese Opera programmes predominated in the Centre’s programmes for the first decade after its 1987 opening.

Chinese Opera is a very traditional theatre form in which exactly following the set steps is essential with little room for innovation. As discussed above, before the PRC was recognised internationally as the official representative of ‘China’, the ROC took the role of guardian of Chinese tradition and it was therefore natural that it should wholeheartedly promote ‘National Opera’, i.e. Chinese Opera. However, after cross-strait exchange started in 1987, and the democratic movement emerged in Taiwan, ‘mainland fever’ and ‘localisation fever’ struggled for supremacy in the development of Taiwan’s Chinese Opera (Wong, 2002: 130-131).

Lu Guang, Da Peng, and Hai Guang regularly performed at the NCKSCC and, like its predecessors, Guo Guang has continued in partnership with the NCKSCC by co-presenting programmes. Because of this it is particularly interesting to review Guo Guang’s programmes at the NCKSCC in order to observe how this Company with its very fundamental ‘Chinese’ background adapted itself to the new era of innovation during the time of Taiwanese identity change.

**Table 5.4 Chronological list of works by the Guo Guang Opera Company (1997-2015)**

No	Year	Name	Content	Note
1	1997	<i>The Phoenix Hairpin</i>	Based on a romance of Song Dynasty poet, Lu Yu and his wife Tang Wan.	Kun opera.

2	1997	<i>Beautiful Country</i>	Based on the story of the last Emperor of the Southern Tang Dynasty, Li Yu.	New creation.
3	1998	<i>Mazu</i>	The story of the Chinese/Taiwanese sea goddess, Mazu.	New creation and it is part of <i>Taiwan Trilogy</i> .
4	1999	<i>Cheng Ch'eng-kung and Taiwan</i>	The story of Cheng Ch'eng-kung and Taiwan.	Rental programme, new creation and it is <i>Taiwan Trilogy</i> .
5	1999	<i>Hsiao He and Han Hsin</i>	The story of two Han Dynasty ministers.	New creation.
6	1999	<i>Liao Tien Ting</i>	Based on a Taiwanese folktale of the Japanese colonial period.	New creation and it is part of <i>Taiwan Trilogy</i> .
7	2000	<i>Traditional Gala for 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</i>	Traditional pieces.	
8	2001	<i>A Celestial Romance between the Galaxy</i>	Traditional Chinese romantic tragedy.	New creation.
9	2002	<i>Journey through Hell</i>	Chinese story of a scholar and his journey through hell.	New creation.
10	2004	<i>Li Shi-min and Wei Cheng</i>	Based on the story of the Taizong Emperor of the Tang Dynasty, Li Shi-min, and his Minister, Wei Cheng.	Rental programme. New creation.
11	2004	<i>Liang and Chu—the Butterfly Lovers</i>	Traditional Chinese romantic tragedy.	Kun opera. New creation.
12	2005	1. <i>Journey through Hell</i> 2. <i>Wang Shi-fong Stirs Up Unrest in the Ning Residence</i>	<i>Wang Shi-fong Stirs Up Unrest in the Ning Residence</i> is based on <i>The Dream of Red Chamber</i> .	10 <sup>th</sup> anniversary work.
13	2006	Pei Yen-ling in Chinese Opera	Special event for the Chinese Opera artist, Pei Yen-ling.	Chinese performer from PRC.
14	2006	<i>Hu Shiue -yan</i>	The story of a Qing Dynasty Chinese businessman.	New creation.
15	2007	<i>Sunlight after Snowfall</i>	Inspired by Chinese calligrapher, Wang Xi-zhi's masterpiece.	New creation with the NSO.
16	2008	<i>Journey through Hell</i>	Chinese story of a scholar on his journey through hell.	
17	2010	<i>Comedy Classics Laughing All the Way</i>	Traditional Chinese Opera repertoires.	

18	2012	<i>Cleopatra and Her Fools</i>	Inspired by Shakespeare's <i>Anthony and Cleopatra</i> .	New creation.
19	2013	<i>Flowing Sleeves and Rouge</i>	Inspired by the romance of Emperor Ming of Tang (Tang Ming-huang) and his Royal Consort Yang (Yan Gui-fei).	New creation.
20	2014	1. <i>Wang Shi-fong Stirs Up Unrest in the Ning Residence</i> 2. <i>Tan Chun</i>	Both are based on <i>The Dream of the Red Chamber</i> .	<i>Tan Chun</i> is a new creation.
21	2015	<i>The Painting of 18 Lohans</i>	Story about Chinese painters.	New creation.

Source: own compilation from NCKSCC programme data

Table 5.4 extracts Guo Guang's programme data from the overall list of performances at the NCKSCC. Taiwan Bangzi Opera Company was part of Guo Guang from 1996 to 2008, and also regularly cooperated with the NCKSCC, but this case study focuses solely on Guo Guang itself. Also, although Lu Guang, Da Peng, and Hai Guang performed regularly at the National Theatre from its opening in 1987 until they were merged, their programmes were mainly based on traditional Chinese elements. Their programmes are not included in this case study.

### Observations

Table 5.4 shows that Guo Gang has tried hard to find a way of establishing an identity for itself by 'introducing contemporary ideologies into traditional Chinese (Peking) Opera' through modernisation and literary advancement. Diverse motifs were introduced (Guo Guang Opera Company, 2019) and, to reflect the shift in Taiwanese identity, 'localisation' was a major feature when Guo Guang was newly launched. Their Artistic Director, Wong An-chi, explains this move as an approach to escape from the fixed mainland Chinese view and to connect with the land where it was based by embracing the native culture of Taiwan. Their main task was to establish new

characteristics for Taiwanese Chinese opera with a ‘new tempo’ and a ‘new viewpoint’.

She stressed that localisation should include:

1. Local elements: amended scripts to include to local stories.
2. Local influence: from local artistic trends and local theatre styles.
3. Local prospect and angle: embed the point of view and interpretation of local people. (Wong, 2002: 131)

This corresponds with the Taiwan scholar, Chang Bi-yu’s view:

The DPP government saw the concept of Taiwanese culture in a different way from the previous KMT government... at a time of nation building, tradition and cultural heritage become very useful and ‘traditional theatre’ (*Xiqu*, 戲曲) is used as an articulation of culture and representative of identity. (Chang: 2007: 66)

The DPP government came to power in 2000, some five years after Guo Guang had been launched. But, as Wong An-chi mentioned, ‘mainland fever’ started in 1987 and Taiwan’s Chinese Opera had already begun to differentiate itself from the mainland Chinese version. What is more, Chinese opera was no longer the ‘national opera’, and other Taiwanese traditional theatre genres, such as Taiwanese opera and Hakka opera started to share in importance to form a new spectrum of Taiwanese traditional theatre.

At that stage, it was critical for Guo Guang as a ‘national’ traditional opera company to find a new position for itself and to develop characteristics that fitted with the new government’s search for a Taiwanese identity. Hobsbawm (1983) claims that ‘the invention of tradition’ is particularly seen in nationalism’s wish to ‘develop a national identity’ and Chang Bi-yu agrees:

The way ‘tradition’ is defined indicates how we see or wish to see ourselves. Throughout modern history, ‘tradition’ has been invented and deployed to produce a sense of community. By evoking historical pride and memory, *Xiqu* (traditional theatre) has become one means by which national identity can be refused and reshaped. (Chang, 2007: 66)



The most notable example of this approach is the *Taiwan Trilogy: Mazu, Cheng Ch'eng-kung and Taiwan*, and *Liao Tien Ting* in 1998 and 1999. This is evidence of the way in which the company was keen to find an appropriate position for itself as a national company during the shift in Taiwanese identity when it faced a major change in the political climate. However, since the formula, aesthetics, and customs of Chinese opera are long-established, it took time to internalise the new aesthetic and to avoid superficial Taiwanese-ness. Wong An-chi emphasises:

Respecting traditions and keeping origination should be as important as localisation and that is why Guo Guang was launched with the Kun Opera, *The Phoenix Hairpin* as its opening presentation. Kun opera has been called 'the mother of all kinds of Chinese traditional theatre' and presenting *The Phoenix Hairpin* proclaims how tradition is important to Guo Guang. (Wong: 2002: 131)

This gave Guo Guang the formidable task of discovering how to balance the new and the old while creating a distinct identity for itself. Their solution, as shown by the productions listed above, was to present traditional myths, stories, history and characters, but with an innovative new approach by creating 'Taiwanese' Chinese (Peking) operas. Productions such as *Sunlight after Snowfall*, *Flowing Sleeves and Rouge* and *The Painting of 18 Lohans* attracted a new generation of audiences and established Guo Guang's own identity in the Chinese Opera world. In 2009, Guo Guang even collaborated with the NCKSCC for Robert Wilson's *Orlando* as a deliberate attempt to try new production styles, and also *Cleopatra and Her Fools* by Taiwanese playwright Chi Wei-lan inspired by Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra* in 2012. As such, this national theatre troupe not only conforms to government cultural policy, but also reflects the transformation of Taiwanese society. To explain the change of Guo Guang, Huang Pen-ting (NCKSCC Programme Manager 2014-2016) explains that nowadays, when the company is seeking a script for a new production, they

naturally develop it with local Taiwanese elements, and are unlikely to work with something from mainland China, for example, Sichuan Province or the Silk Road. Huang believes that it is natural for Guo Guang to take ‘the closest, local and familiar material from where they grew up to initiate the research’. Nevertheless, from the box office point of view, they have to produce programmes which can be recognised by the local audience (Huang, interview of 3 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author).

Lee Huey-mei (NCKCC Artistic Director 2014-2018) agrees with Huang and adds that Guo Guang has created its own direction which is totally different from the PRC’s Chinese opera. It is also evident that Guo Guang’s audience is very different from that of the PRC’s Chinese opera performances in Taiwan (Lee, interview of 7 December 2015). Guo Guang has established its own characteristics and distinctive features which are based on the traditional Chinese (Peking) form but created with Taiwanese elements. The company has now reformed itself as the ‘Taiwanese Chinese (Peking) Opera Company’. The NCKSCC’s former Programme Manager (2012-2014), Li Chia-chi asks:

Would we still regard Guo Guang’s productions as having a ‘Chinese element’? When Guo Gang tours to mainland China, the locals all see it as a ‘Taiwanese production performed by a Taiwanese company’, because all the programmes were created in Taiwan, and performed by Taiwanese artists. Guo Guan’s programmes are therefore Taiwanese. (Li, interview of 27 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author)

This coincides what Chien Wen-ping, the current Artistic Director of the Weiwuying, who was also the Music Director of the NSO from 2001 to 2007 asserts in the Section 5.2.2 above that although classical music is a Western arts form and most classical works are by foreign composers, ‘as long as the music is played by Taiwanese, it should be called Taiwanese’ (Chien, interview of 1 June 2018, translated from

Mandarin by the author). Although Peking Opera and classical music were not originally Taiwanese, they have become universal art forms that can be played by performing arts companies of any nationality and Guo Guang is a good example of this.

Taiwan scholar Chang Bi-yu also comments on the new identity of Taiwan's traditional theatre:

Today, which *Xiqu* (traditional theatre) form is Taiwan's *Guoju* (national opera) is no longer an issue for debate. Taiwan's *Xiqu* heritage offers a multicultural tradition for contemporary Taiwan and represents its new image to international society. By negotiating our sense of identity, constructing new heritages and historical memories, and by reclaiming the legitimacy of 'tradition', a new national narrative is formulated and takes effect. A newly invented *Xiqu* 'tradition' seems to speak for us, and to us, as a national narrative, telling a story so unique that only we, the Taiwanese, can claim the ownership. (Chang, 2007: 67)

This means that Taiwan no longer needs a 'national opera' because none of the Taiwanese traditional theatre genres can be regarded as dominant enough to deserve that distinction; each is defined by its own characteristics. More importantly, in a democratic country with a diverse society, different performing art forms may be preferred or disliked. Thus, the significant thing is not how they are regarded, but how excellent their performances are. After all, the most important issue is the evaluation by the audience and the market.

It therefore makes no difference whether the art form arrived in Taiwan centuries ago from south China (e.g. puppet theatre, Nan guan and Bei guan) and has been regarded as Taiwanese traditional theatre, or whether it arrived seven decades ago from mainland China (e.g. Chinese opera and Bangzi opera), or whether it is original Taiwanese opera, because all have become part of a newly forged 'Taiwanese traditional theatre' that is an important component of today's Taiwanese culture. The

evolution of Guo Gang, along with other Taiwanese traditional theatre companies, is a prime example of the transformation in Taiwan from mono-Chinese culture to multi-Taiwanese culture, including Chinese (*Zhonghua*) culture.

## 5.4 Conclusion

This chapter analyses data of the 4,067 programmes produced and presented by the NCKSCC between 1987 and 2017. It also looks at three case studies: the 9 Flagship Productions of the NCKSCC; the 44 programmes of the Government-subsidised Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan; and the 21 programmes of the state-owned Guo Guang Opera Company in order to investigate the relationship between the development of the NCKSCC's programmes and the shift of Taiwanese identity. The analysis shows that the trend of the NCKSCC's programmes corresponds to that of Taiwanese identity as a whole in which Chinese identity is declining and Taiwanese is increasing. The same trend appears in the NCKSCC's Flagship Productions, Cloud Gate's programmes and Guo Gang's productions. The reason for this correlation is that the NCKSCC relies on both its own artistic preferences as well as those of its partner artists and companies in its programming, and all of these programmes reflect the Taiwanese identity of their decision makers.

Constructing programmes involves making a balance between the Centre's artistic vision and the needs of its audience and this becomes the 'core idea' and 'branding' of the Centre. There is, therefore, an interaction between the NCKSCC, the artists and the audience where each has an influence on the direction of the programming. For example, since audiences for Chinese Opera are declining while those for Taiwanese Opera are on the increase, the programmers at the NCKSCC take note of this as they plan their programmes and this is equally true for the artists in

Cloud Gate and Guo Guang. At the same time, the Centre can take the initiative and, by offering more Taiwanese programmes to the audience, it can generate a new enthusiasm for ‘Taiwaneseness’ (*Taiwan shing*, 台灣性) in programming. It is the responsibility of artists to innovate with new work that attracts an audience as it follows their creative concepts, and thereby moving cultural life forward.

The research illustrates that the NCKSCC’s programming, its Flagship Productions, the works of the Cloud Gate Dance of Taiwan, and the Guo Guang Opera Company epitomise the performing arts life in Taiwan and go hand in hand with the shift in Taiwanese identity. However, the most contentious issue is how to define ‘Taiwanese’ and ‘Chinese’ cultures in a clear way because Taiwan and the PRC share much of their cultural heritage and there is ongoing competition between them for ownership of cultural origins. The ‘distinctiveness of Taiwanese culture is as not clear-cut as the new DPP government might wish’ (Chang, 2007: 66). Taiwan has for centuries been a migrant society, so Taiwanese culture is an ongoing *mélange* emerging from its history and does not have a single identity. ‘Toleration and respect for differences is essential’ (Jung, interview of 11 June 2018, translated from Mandarin by the author).

The reality is that the essence, character, and spirit of the performing arts at the NCKSCC have not changed through the years. What has changed is the way in which programmers, artists and companies see them. At one time, concerts by Taiwanese composers would be given in a ‘Chinese Composer Series’, but nowadays the same concert would be part of a ‘Taiwanese Composer Series’. Once, indigenous dance would have appeared in a ‘Chinese Minority Series’, but now it is part of a ‘Taiwanese Indigenous Series’. The performance itself is the same, but the way people look at it has changed as they invent for themselves a new tradition in Hobsbawm’s sense (Hobsbawm, 1983). Equally, the notion that all the ethnic groups that were once

amalgamated into a broad-based Chinese family is now appreciated in a different light and a multicultural Taiwanese nation has been newly imagined in Anderson's sense (Anderson, 2006). This chapter also shows how new forms, new stories and new ways of production have emerged as a redefined multi-Taiwanese culture has been recognised. The most important thing is still the excellence of the productions along with audience satisfaction.

Since Performing Arts Centres were originally a concept borrowed from Western culture, the Western performing arts heritage has heavily influenced the NCKSCC's programmes. Nowadays, most programmes contain international elements even if they are performed by Taiwanese companies or artists and there is a growing belief that whenever programmes are created by Taiwanese artists, they are Taiwanese. The NCKSCC's Flagship Productions revealed a determination to demonstrate innovation in Taiwanese performing arts and to obtain international recognition that Taiwanese identity has been transformed. There is an enthusiasm to go out onto the world stage and demonstrate confidence in Taiwan through its performing arts, whatever the country's diplomatic status.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

### 6.1 From the Past to the Present: Research Findings

This thesis has been designed to answer the question posed in its title: *What is the relationship between Taiwanese identity, government cultural policy and programming at the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre/National Performing Arts Centre?* and this chapter brings together the findings to give an answer to that question. In order to do so, it has been useful in the first place to subdivide the main question into a number of lower-ranking questions which have been investigated chapter by chapter, so that their answers can be combined to present the main conclusion here along with thoughts about future useful research.

It may be helpful to reiterate the lower-ranking research questions (RQs) and to indicate in which chapter the research findings can be located,

#### In chapter 2:

RQ 1. How can Taiwanese identity be defined, and how has it evolved? What are the factors that shape or influence Taiwanese identity?

#### In chapter 3:

RQ 2. How has Taiwan's cultural policy evolved under different government regimes? Does Taiwanese identity relate to the making of cultural policy and if so, how?

#### In chapter 4:

RQ 3. How have the performing arts and performing arts centres developed in Taiwan? How does the Government support them? Have changes in Taiwanese identity affected the performing arts?

RQ 4. What is the relationship between the Government and the state-owned NCKSCC/NPAC? How is government cultural policy translated into the Centre's programmes?

*In chapter 5:*

RQ5. What is the relationship between the historical changes in programming at the NCKSCC/NPAC and Taiwanese identity?

**Research findings**

Chapter 2 discusses the question of Taiwanese identity: how can it be defined, how has it evolved and what factors have influenced it. A literature review concluded that Raymond Williams's broad definition of culture as 'a whole way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual' (Williams, 1958, 1983: xvi) gives useful analytical guidance to the present research. This definition is relevant because it shows how issues of identity, policy, democracy, artistic autonomy, immigration and so on, are influential components of culture taken as a whole. In one sense Taiwan has only become a 'nation' in the last seventy years since the arrival of Chang Kai-shek and his followers and the political split with the mainland. Thus, although the roots of Taiwanese identity can be found on mainland China, and on Taiwan itself (including its time under Japanese colonial rule), the chapter's investigation into the formation of a new national identity for Taiwan as a nation has focused on the period since 1949. One feature is quite clear: cultural identity in Taiwan is a constantly changing concept that is 'becoming' rather than settled and static.

The changing political situation in Taiwan has resulted in an 'imagined' Taiwanese identity that varies among the population according to people's political identification. Within the space of a single century, Taiwan has seen a number of very different regimes, and policies are strikingly different now from what they were in



1949 when the new regime had traditional Chinese history and culture at its heart. There have been fundamental changes to every aspect of Taiwanese society with the most significant taking place in 1987 when martial law was lifted and Taiwan became a democratic country. Democracy altered the relationship between the Government and the governed so that the thoughts and aspirations of the Taiwanese people began to have great impact on the way government policy is formulated—not least cultural policy. As well as regime change, the country's ethnic composition has changed greatly in recent years which has meant that Taiwanese identity has evolved to form a specifically Taiwan-centred identity. Although the important role of Chinese (*Zhonghua*) culture in Taiwan is acknowledged, the way identity is imagined and recognised today by different ethnic or immigrant communities of Taiwanese society differs widely according to an individual's background.

There is pressure from the People's Republic of China to make Taiwanese people believe that their culture is Chinese. Yet, the reality is that as well as Chinese, indigenous culture, cultures brought by new migrants and a whole range of other sub-cultures are recognised, and the whole package is now appreciated as 'Taiwanese culture'. Taiwanese multiculturalism (*Taiwan duo yuan wen hua*, 台灣多元文化) is seen as a way of encouraging a sense of nationhood and there is a recognition that collectively held systems of meaning and customary patterns of thought and behaviour can be shared by all the people of Taiwan.

Just as Taiwanese identity has changed under a varying political climate, so the Government's approach to formulating cultural policy has shown a parallel evolution. Chapter 3 looked at the way cultural policy has developed from 1949 to 2017 by examining policy-making under different government regimes. Some policies are overtly cultural (*explicit*) while other policies (*implicit*) affect the nation's culture in the broad sense without being acknowledged as cultural policies. When the KMT's

committees dominated the country's cultural affairs, their policies were implemented through coercion and censorship. Culture was an evident priority for them as demonstrated by the establishment in 1981 of the Council of Cultural Affairs at Cabinet-level in the Government and of the National Cultural and Arts Foundation in 1996. But after democracy, a series of culture white papers indicated the changed direction of cultural policy which was to be implemented largely by selective project funding. The CCA was upgraded to become the Ministry of Culture whose mission is to create equal cultural rights for everyone.

In 1949 the incoming government was determined to defend the supremacy and homogeneity of 'great Chinese culture' against the communist philistines on the mainland and implemented this top-down policy in Taiwan by force. But in democratic Taiwan, there has been bottom-up pressure from the Taiwanese people through their elected representatives in the Government to create a specifically Taiwanese identity which acknowledges cultural diversity and respects minority Taiwanese groups. Politics, Taiwanese identity and cultural policy are demonstrably interconnected.

Chapter 4 sharpened the focus down to the performing arts and the role they play in Taiwan's cultural life, especially through performing arts centres with their programmes of events. Cultural identity and policy as well as the pursuit of institutional autonomy are significant factors for a performing arts centre. Taiwan's PACs have shown an overall change from programming designed to protect and promote the supremacy of Chinese culture to programmes that celebrate a contemporary cultural landscape where *Zhonghua* Chinese heritage is associated with, and changed by both Western and home-grown Taiwanese local influences. Apart from shaping Taiwanese identity, another crucial aspect of government cultural policy has been the development of PACs which were initially a home for the high arts to become more community-based venues. Policy dictates a PAC's nature and identity

but its own staff decide what appears there, and are thus the driving mechanism behind its artistic development in a way that reflects the social and political climate.

The opportunity to interview all the eight surviving Directors and Artistic Directors of the NCKSCC between its opening in 1987 and 2017, as well as the first directors of the two new centres of the NPAC has been a unique privilege for this research. In addition, three of the NCKSCC's Chairmen and two Executive Secretaries of its Board as well as two Programme Managers have been interviewed to discover how this state-owned PAC has operated from the point of view of its management and programming, as well as its relationship with government ministers and their policies. These interviews have given a special insight into the thinking of the most influential people in deciding cultural policy in Taiwan. Their thoughts and the resulting policies have contributed to the thesis's understanding of Taiwan's cultural history and the political climate within which the PACs have operated.

The NCKSCC was the first non-departmental public body in Taiwan. It operates under the arm's-length principle through which the Taiwanese Government allows the management of performing arts organisations autonomy from political interference, despite a subsidy of around 50% of the Centre's income. It is in the nature of arts programming to have a slow momentum because programmes are commissioned up to two years in advance. This means that the NCKSCC appears to develop its missions and objectives independently of changes in government policy because its programmes are fixed in advance of more rapid changes to political thinking. As a result, rather than immediately following every new government cultural policy, the NCKSCC's programmes have represented the choices of its Directors with their variety of backgrounds. To an extent, these reflect the cultural and social environment of their time, but they are also influenced by Directors' sensitivity to government aims.

The Government's cultural policies are very much in the minds of the Centre's Board members as they oversee its work, so it is not surprising that the NCKSCC's objectives dovetail neatly with those of the Government. At the same time, the Government's cultural policy is worded in such a non-specific and general way that clever wording on the Centre's part can make almost anything it wants to do appear to comply with government policy. Sensitivity to the political climate on the part of the Centre's senior management and the rapport between them and government officials (along with concern for continued government subsidy) mean that the Government's cultural policy has had an undeniable influence over the work of the NCKSCC, but it is maintained in an implicit and informal 'arm's-length' way. The comments made at interview by senior government and Centre officials are very relevant to the way that non-departmental public bodies operate through the arm's-length principle in other countries apart from Taiwan, and provide an interesting contribution to the literature on the subject.

To explore the correlation between the NCKSCC's programming and changing Taiwanese identity, Chapter 5 undertook a pioneering investigation by analysing the 4,067 programmes produced and presented at the Centre from its opening in 1987 until its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017. Detailed case studies of the 44 programmes of the Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan, and the 21 programmes of the Guo Guang Opera Company were designed to probe whether their programmes correlate with developments in Taiwanese identity. The analysis carried out here shows a clear link in the Centre's programmes between trends in programming and shifts in national identity, and this is true for both its own programmes and those of associated companies. Where there was once a deliberate emphasis on traditional Chinese, there is now multicultural Taiwanese, perhaps demonstrating an increasing maturity, individuality and self-confidence in the nation. Programming development at the

NCKSCC, has gone through a process of Taiwanisation inspired by local stories, talents, audiences, and collaboration. There is a growing belief that no matter where artistic forms originated, whenever programmes are created or performed by Taiwanese artists, they should be regarded as Taiwanese programmes.

The National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre, as the Government's main venue for the presentation of the performing arts, is a window to display every kind of idea, expression or identity planted by their creators in the works it presents. Its presentations also reflect the preferences and thoughts of programmers who have to consider a whole range of factors in maintaining its autonomy from the Government. The performing arts have a reputation of being 'high culture' and not as popular as other more commercial shows, but programmes nowadays are not intended for an elite audience and if the intention is to attract a wider spectrum of society, the Centre now must make a careful balance between popularising its programmes and maintaining cutting-edge artistic innovation. Looking into the future, it partly depends on what proportion of the Centre's finance comes from the box office and what from government subsidy. If the Government were to expect the Centre to become more financially self-sufficient, the implication is that it would have to put on more crowd-pleasing shows. If, on the other hand, it expects the Centre to continue to be a showcase for cutting-edge Taiwanese cultural innovation both at home and abroad, it will need to provide commensurate financial support. However, there is clearly a danger here of being unrealistic by attempting to provide innovative performances to a mass audience who are not ready to pay money at the box office for unfamiliar and perhaps esoteric artworks. Clear thinking when setting objectives is a necessity.

Cultural policy is made by people in the government who are children of their time and who respond to the prevailing zeitgeist. And programming at the Centre is planned by directors who are equally people of their time. Since 1949, the ideas of

both politicians in power and Centre directors have evolved in the same direction, each reflecting the nature of culture in their time. Government cultural policy and programming at the Centre have therefore developed along parallel lines without direct and explicit intervention between them. The programming of the Centre accordingly mirrors the development of a Taiwanese identity which is also reflected in the way cultural policy has changed. Policy has not dictated programming. This is a significant finding and it may be that the system works in Taiwan and perhaps elsewhere because all the significant decision-makers in both government and arts administration tend to come from a similar stratum of society who are likely to know one another and to think along similar lines. This leads to a comfortable feeling of trust that nobody is likely to upset the equilibrium by setting unrealistic targets or by putting on shows that invite public opprobrium.

### **Contribution of the study**

This thesis offers a number of contributions to the academic discussion of the performing arts and cultural policy. Some are specific to Taiwan, and some have broader relevance.

The specific focus is on the shift of Taiwanese identity, the evolution of Taiwanese performing arts and the development of the NCKSCC/NPAC's programming. This adds to the knowledge of those spheres in studies of both Taiwan and performing arts centres in general. The thesis also contributes to the emerging field of research into the management of the performing arts, both in theory and in practice, by bringing in new data and analysis and offering a historical interpretation of a state-supported performing arts centre of national significance. It does so through a synthesis of literature from studies in cultural policy, cultural identity and cultural autonomy. Its principal purpose is to establish the historical cultural significance of

the performing arts programming of a national cultural institution and as a result, the thesis demonstrates how a sustained historical study of the performing arts programming can make a contribution to the broader cultural historical understanding of an independent country.

As for the broader significance for academics working on similar subjects in other parts of the world. Firstly, the findings illustrate how democratisation in both politics and culture has played a significant role in the transformation of national and cultural identity, and therefore in the making of cultural policy. Secondly, they emphasise that a PAC, especially a state-owned one, is part of the fabric of a country's everyday life which means that its programmes not only reflect the PAC's identity, but also that of its country as a whole. Government policy, PAC programming and public identity have a mutually interconnected relationship where each affects the others to a certain extent. The third finding of general interest relates to the way an arm's-length relationship between the government and its PAC operates in practice and it has been significant to find that everybody on both sides of this relationship at the NCKSCC is adamant that the Government has no influence on PAC programming. But in saying that, both government and PAC are neglecting to mention that the PACs are subject to assessment through performance indicators, are reliant on continued government subsidy and that the government has a cultural policy, albeit a broadly-worded one. All this means that the PAC knows very well that there are limits to acceptable programming and that this is monitored by a government-appointed Board. Nevertheless, the system works smoothly and, at least in Taiwan, this is to a large extent because everybody involved, on both sides of the equation, are well-known to one another and can be confident in their mutual trust.

## **6.2 The Future of the National Performing Arts Centre**

Taiwan's National Performing Arts Centre (NPAC) is an 'umbrella' institution launched in April 2014. This brought together the National Theatre & Concert Hall (NTCH), which had supplanted the National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre (NCKSCC), and two new venues. The National Taichung Theatre (NTT), opened in September 2016 and the National Kaohsiung Centre for the Arts (Weiwuying), was launched in October 2018 and they are both too recent to have had a noticeable influence to Taiwan's performing arts environment so far, although that is the longer-term aim of the three-venue NAPC.

Nevertheless, some distinctions between the three venues have already emerged and this will deserve future research. In the first place, the two new venues are nearly 30 years younger than the NTCH and were conceived in an era when Taiwan's social atmosphere and identity had changed a great deal. They are, as a result, very different organisations from the capital-city NTCH, not least in their architecture. Plate 6.1 shows the National Theatre and Concert Hall in the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Park. The whole park was designed by mainland Chinese architect Yang Cho-cheng as a memorial to a great man who was concerned to preserve Chinese culture. The architecture is therefore in the 'Chinese Palace' style reminiscent of Beijing. In contrast, Plate 6.2 shows the National Taichung Theatre which was designed by Japanese architect Toyo Ito, while Plate 6.3 is the National Kaohsiung Centre for the Arts designed by the Dutch architect Francine Houben. Both the latter are entirely different from the style of the NTCH and are in an international style with nothing specifically Chinese about them.





**Plate 6.1. The National Theatre & Concert Hall (source, official website)**



**Plate 6.2 The National Taichung Theatre (source, official website)**



**Plate 6.3 The National Kaohsiung Centre for the Arts (Weiwuying)**  
(source, official website)

These outward signs of the way that Taiwanese identity has changed are significant for the future of the three institutions illustrated. The NTCH has decades of history behind it and over that time has accommodated the development of entirely new ways of thinking about Taiwanese identity and its own role in the country's cultural life. Nevertheless, the architecture is a daily reminder of its original purpose to both staff and the public and proclaims a central, national, role as befits a capital city. The two new centres do not carry this historical baggage. They are part of the NPAC, but are starting life with a specifically local role in supporting and encouraging the cultural life of their areas.

The NPAC is a non-departmental public body, and the MOC recognises its autonomy under the oversight of a Board that is responsible for all three PACs. But with the arrival of the two additional Centres, the dynamic between the NPAC and the Ministry, and between the three sister Centres has altered the focus of the Board. The NTT and Weiwuying still have to establish themselves within their local communities, to create their own identity and to avoid appearing merely local branches of the NTCH. Thus, although the overall policy is to spread government-sponsored access to the

performing arts broadly across the country, the way this is being carried out in practice makes a clear distinction between the national role of the NTCH and the local role of the two new centres.

When the NCKSCC was under the Ministry of Education (MOE), its budget was a small fraction of the total for the Ministry and its work was on the periphery of the Ministry's educational affairs. However, under the MOC, the NPAC has become a large proportion of that smaller Ministry's concerns, with the result that it is likely to receive more detailed ministerial attention and scrutiny. And since the NPAC is now nearer to the heart of cultural policy-making it will be all the more important for it to pay attention to personal relationships between it and its Ministry. If the NPAC is more closely under the eye of the MOC than the NCKSCC was with the MOE, there is more opportunity for politicians to interfere with the Centre's work. But at the same time, the Centre may be able to have more influence over the way cultural policy is formulated. Despite any arm's-length relationship, the MOC and its Minister are still accountable to the Legislative Yuan (Parliament) and the MOC will always be concerned to demonstrate to the Legislative Yuan that it is keeping efficient control over government spending through the NPAC. How to make a proper balance in its programming between artistic considerations, the audience and cultural policy is therefore the critical crucial task for the NPAC. Both the MOC and NPAC are still young, so continued observation of the development of their relationship would provide significant material for future research.

The long gap between the opening of the NCKSCC and action to make the NTT and Weiwuying a reality is evidence that arts policy takes a low priority for government spending. Even though performing arts companies are lively and well developed in Taiwan, the ability (or inclination) of the Government to spend money on them is limited. Up to now, the focus has always been on the capital, Taipei.

Stepping out from Taipei and creating national-level performing arts centres in central and south Taiwan demonstrates a willingness to encourage a nationwide balance and to achieve the goal of democratising culture. But now that there are three Centres to be funded with appropriate levels of government subsidy, how far will this intention to spread access to culture across the country be translated into the reality of further financial support? Will the NTCH find its subsidy reduced in order to service the new Centres or will the grant to the NPAC be increased to allow each Centre to function at an effective level? Time will tell, and the state of Taiwan's economy will play a significant role here. If additional money is not forthcoming, will the NPAC be forced to become more commercial in its operations and to programme more crowd-pleasing block busters at the expense of innovative new artworks that have less public appeal? Decisions of this kind have a profound effect on cultural life and if the Government sees culture as a desirable luxury that has low financial priority compared with, say, defence or education, challenging economic times for the country would hit the NPAC hard.

Meanwhile, in pursuit of making themselves a new local presence, the NTT has announced its vision of constant evolution in arts and lifestyle and a mission to build a 'Wow! Awesome!' theatre for artists, audiences, and local residents, along with outreach programmes and lectures taking place in different venues in the surrounding counties (NTT, 2016). In the same way, during construction of its building, Weiwuying initiated the 'Southern Performing Art Development Project' with outreach programmes aiming to cultivate creative talent, performing arts companies and management staff, and also to develop the audience in Southern Taiwan (The Preparatory Office of Weiwuying, 2016). After its opening, it put into practice its ambition to be a 'Centre for the arts, and arts for the people' by forming a welcoming space open to the public and hoping that the performing arts would 'become part of

everyday life' (Weiwuying, 2019). Both new centres show their commitment to local communities and are keen to inject a local perspective into the arts which is very different from that of the NCKSCC.

All three Artistic Directors interviewed for this thesis agreed that collaboration and coproduction are vital to the new working mode of the NPAC, but they also said that forging close local connections is an important task for them. This was emphasised by the NTT and Weiwuying. The NPAC says that it shares a common mission to cultivate talent, undertake international collaboration and promote local development, but how far this promotion of local talent will apply to the NTCH has yet to emerge. It may be that while the NTT and the Weiwuying see 'local' as meaning their local areas, the NTCH feels that 'local' means Taiwan.

Since the Chairman and Board of Directors of the NPAC hold part-time honorary positions, and there is no NPAC executive body, one of the significant issues for the future will be how the NPAC coordinates the policies of its three complexes. How will the NPAC administer its programmes or productions? Does this suggest that the NPAC will tend to present programmes from other venues instead of being its own production house? Or will it bring together associated artists and companies locally to produce its own programmes? The NPAC has not yet settled into a regular mode of operation, so whether and how it will reshape the cultural environment in Taiwan is an ongoing question whose answer will change with time and require further research. In particular, with three lively Centres promoting local talent in different parts of the country it will be interesting to discover whether this policy of localisation leads to local differences.

## **6.3 Subjects for Future Research**

In the course of conducting the research for this thesis and writing up its findings, some topics have suggested themselves for future research into Taiwan's performing arts. The research reported on here has concentrated on the NCKSCC/NTCH because it provides data on programming over a long period. But the newly formed NPAC with its very young PACs, the NTT and Weiwuying, deserve continuous research along the lines used for this thesis to investigate how they develop their relationship with their localities and audiences in Taichung (NTT) and Kaohsiung (Weiwuying) respectively, and whether they inspire local creativity and appreciation of the arts. At a broader level, the role that the performing arts in general, and the NPAC in particular, play in Taiwan's political concern for international recognition, influence and collaboration is also a fruitful topic for research. From this and from the observations made about the future in 6.2 above, a number of themes for worthwhile future research become clear.

### **Local identity**

As government cultural policy has become concerned with democratisation of culture and has sought to spread access to performing arts across the country, it has initiated a new era of local arts through its two new PACs. Each of them has professed an enthusiasm for encouraging and performing the work of local artists and attracting new local audiences in a way that has not been done before. The local Centres are new and are now in the process of finding their feet and discovering how best to work for their localities. So it is an opportune moment to follow their progress and to find out whether the focus on circumscribed localities gives rise to a distinct local character to creative work. Will there be evidence of local identity development in the NTT and Weiwuying through encouraging local audience and supporting local artists in Taichung and Kaohsiung? What will be the common and distinctive features through the

programming development connected to local stories and materials at the NTT and Weiwuying? And what will be the relationship of their localities with Taiwanese identity? These will be the appealing subjects to start the research and to collect programme data from now as there two Centres just launched not long ago. Moreover, it will be also significant to carry on the research on the NTCH's programming development focusing on its 'locality' as it is no longer the one and only national performing arts centre of the country.

### **The audience**

This research has concentrated on the relationship between national cultural identity, government policy and programming at the NPAC. Clearly, both government officials and senior staff at the Centre have a deciding influence on programming. But there is a third influence that has not been the subject of this research project—the audience. A Centre does not programme work for itself, the process is intended to attract, entertain and educate members of the public. But those people choose whether or not to attend a performance, so understanding more about what influences their decision-making is important in directing future programming and discovering whether government intentions in providing subsidies are fulfilled. At the moment, there is no information about exactly who attends performances or whether attendance is restricted to any particular stratum of society. Current KPIs for the Centre focus on the numbers of people who attend performances, but if the intention is to democratise culture and to show that taxpayers' money is spent fairly across the whole population, more detailed analysis of who attends what kind of performance is critical knowledge. Also, through this subject, the indication of cultural democracy in the way that the audience obtains the right and channel to participate in the process of programming will be another compelling research project to conduct.

## **Commercialism**

National PACs are subsidised by the Government. But the amount of money that is allocated to them is dependent on the state of the national economy and there is always pressure on PACs to operate on diminishing government subsidy. The simplest way for a PAC to increase its self-generated income is through the box office and this implies putting on more crowd-pleasing shows at the expense of innovative artworks that push the creative boundaries but are less commercially attractive. Continuing analysis of programming at the NPAC can reveal any tendency for the balance between innovation and box office appeal to change. This is significant because it has an effect on the cultural life of the country and the ability of Taiwanese artists to develop both their art and the artistic awareness of the public.

## **International strategy**

Taiwan's contested status as a country means that its government is continually concerned to present Taiwan as somewhere different to, and separate from, its overbearing neighbour. Culture has played a part in Taiwan's strategy to pursue this policy. For the home population it has been important to bring in the best of foreign culture—orchestras, theatre, dance groups and so on—in order to promote education on international culture and on the trends that are exciting people worldwide. Equally, it has been important for Taiwan to present itself to the outside world as a country rich in creative talent that should be taken seriously by cultural cognoscenti. Obviously, the NCKSCC has been aiming to promote international exchange for a long time. Does the Centre's hard effort achieve its purpose? To what extent do the programmes at the NPAC influence people's awareness of international culture? Is there evidence that Taiwanese performing artists and culture are becoming better known abroad through



the Centre? What is the relationship between the Centre's work and Taiwan's diplomatic policy? These will be the fascinating research subjects to investigate.

### **Cultural development in the PRC**

This research has followed the development of cultural identity in Taiwan through looking at the programming at the NPAC and its predecessors since 1949. Starting from a determinedly Chinese attitude on the part of the government, democracy has resulted in the creation of a distinctive Taiwanese culture today. But what of the mainland? An equivalent research project that looks at how mainland Chinese cultural identity has changed over the same period of time would produce fascinating results. The PRC's political history over that time has been very different from Taiwan's, but has there been cultural evolution there? In the absence of democracy, are pluralistic ideas of culture encouraged or even acknowledged? What role have international trends in the arts world played in influencing today's Chinese culture and cultural identity? What can the programming at Beijing's 'National Centre for the Performing Arts', which opened in 2007, tell us about creative artistic life in the PRC?

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## Appendix 1

### List of interviews

No.	Organisation	Title	Name	Location and date of interview	Notes
1	NCKSCC	Director (1988-1990)	Liu Feng-shueh	Taipei, 27 November 2015	No professional relation to author
2		Director (1990-1993)	Hu Yao-heng	Taipei, 25 June 2018	No professional relation to author
3		Director/Artistic Director (2001-2004) Chairman (2013-2014)	Ju Tzong-ching	Taipei, 3 December 2015	Chairman of the NPAC (2017-) The author's superior (2003-2004)
4		Artistic Director (2004-2007)	Pin Heng	Changhua, 29 November 2015	The author's superior (2004-2007)
5		Artistic Director (2007-2008)	Yang Chi-wei	Taipei, 14 June 2018	The author's superior (2007-2008)
6		Artistic Director (2008-2010)	Liu Chung-shu	Taipei, 25 May 2018	The author's superior (2008-2010)
7		Artistic Director (2010-2013)	Huang Pi-twan	Taipei, 4 December 2015	Minister of CCA (2008-229) The author's superior (2010-2013)
8	NTCH, NPAC	Artistic Director (2014-2018)	Lee Huey-mei	Taipei, 7 December 2015	Programme Manager (2003-2007; 2010-2012) The author's superior (2003-2014)
9	NCKSCC	Chairman (2006-2007)	Wu Jing-jyi	Taipei, 3 December 2015	The author's superior (2006-2007)
10		Chairwoman (2007-2010)	Tchen Yu-chiou	Taipei, 27 November 2015	Minister of CCA (2000-2004) The author's superior (2007-2010)
11		Chairman (2010-2013)	Kuo Wei-fan	Taipei, 28 June 2018	Minister of CCA (1988-1993)

					Minister of MOE (1993-1996) The author's superior (2010-2013)
12	NCKSCC (NTCH)	Programme Manager (2012-2014)	Li Chia-Chi	Taipei, 27 June 2018	The author's peer (2004-2014)
13		Programme Manager (2014-2016)	Huang Pen-ting	Taichung, 3 July 2018	The author's peer (2004-2014)
14	NTT, NPAC	Artistic Director (2016-2018)	Wang Wei-yi	Taipei, 5 July 2018	Senior Executive Officer to the Minister of the MOC (2012-2014) No professional relation to author
15	Weiyuying, NPAC	Artistic Director (2018-)	Chien Wen-pin	Taipei, 1 June 2018	Music Director of the NSO (2001-2007) No professional relation to author
16	NCKSCC, NPAC	Executive Secretary of the Board (2004-2014)	Wang Yun-yuh	Taipei, 14 June 2018	Manager of the NSO The author's peer (2004-2014)
17	NCKSCC, NPAC	Executive Secretary of the Board (2014-2016)	Wang Wei-ling	Taichung, 9 June 2018	Programme Manager of the NTT (2016-) The author's peer (2007-2014)
18	Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan	Artistic Director	Lin Hwai-min	London, 6 May 2016	Artist No professional relation to author
19	Taipei Philharmonic Foundation for Culture and Education	Music Director	Ku Yu-chung	Taipei, 8 June 2018	Artist No professional relation to author
20		Independent Producer	Sun Ping	Taipei, 11 June 2018	No professional relation to author

21		Former MOC Officer/Composer	Lin Fang-yi	Taipei 8 June 2018	No professional relation to author
22		Journalist/Critics	Chi Hui-ling	Taichung, 10 June 2018	No professional relation to author
23	Academia	Assistant Professor	Geng Yi-wei	Taipei, 8 June 2018	Consultant to the MOC No professional relation to author
24		Assistant Professor	Jung Shu-hwa	Taipei 11 June 2018	Consultant to the MOC No professional relation to author
25	Taiwan Association of Cultural Policy Studies	Director, Board of Directors	Wei Chun-ying	Taipei, 7 June 2018	No professional relation to author

## Appendix 2

### List of cultural policy documents used in this study

No.	Announced year	Title	Issuing authority
1	1947 1997	<i>The Constitution of the Republic of China</i> <i>The Amendment of the Constitution of the Republic of China</i>	
2	1967	<i>The First Draft of the Main Points for Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture</i>	CRPCC
3	1967	<i>The Plan to Carry Out Reviving and Promoting Chinese Culture</i>	CRPCC
4	1977	<i>Twelve Construction Plans</i>	Executive Yuan
5	1978	<i>Plan of the MOE for Building County/Local Cultural Centres</i>	MOE
6	1978	<i>Plan for Enhancing Cultural and Educational Recreation Activities</i>	MOE
7	1979	<i>Regulation of Managing Entertainment and Arts Business</i>	MOE
8	1982	<i>Cultural Heritage Preservation Act</i>	CCA
9	1987	<i>Plan for Enhancing Cultural Construction</i> (adapted from <i>Plan for Enhancing Cultural and Educational Recreation Activities</i> )	CCA

10	1992	<i>The International Performance Troupe Cultivation Plan</i>	CCA
11	1998	<i>The Performing Arts Group's Development Foster Plan</i>	CCA
12	1998	Culture white paper 1998	CCA
13	2002	<i>Cultural and Arts Reward Act</i>	CCA
14	2004	Culture white paper 2004	CCA
15	2004	<i>National Chiang Kai-shek Cultural Centre Establishment Law</i>	MOE
16	2010	<i>The Law for the Development of the Cultural and Creative Industries</i>	CCA
17	2011	<i>Non-Departmental Bodies Act</i>	Executive Yuan
18	2012	<i>Ministry of Culture Organisation Law</i>	Executive Yuan
19	2014	<i>Act for Establishment of National Performing Arts Centre</i>	MOC
20	2019	<i>Organisation Act of the Taiwan Creative Content Agency</i>	MOC

## Appendix 3

### List of the NCKSCC's produced and presented programmes (1987-2017)

#### 1987

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/Opera</b>	1	14	18	2	11	46
<b>Dance/</b>	0	0	1	0	2	3
<b>Theatre/Traditional Theatre</b>	1	8	0	0	1	10
<b>Total</b>	2	22	19	2	14	59

#### 1988

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/Opera</b>	4	20	50	7	22	103
<b>Dance/</b>	2	1	2	1	7	13

<b>Theatre/ Traditional Theatre</b>	7	40	1	0	2	50
<b>Total</b>	13	61	53	8	31	166

### 1989

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/ Opera</b>	2	15	79	17	32	147
<b>Dance/</b>	0	2	3	2	13	19
<b>Theatre/ Traditional Theatre</b>	11	34	6	0	2	52
<b>Total</b>	13	51	88	19	47	218

### 1990

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/ Opera</b>	7	18	104	18	53	200
<b>Dance/</b>	2	0	7	1	15	25
<b>Theatre/ Traditional Theatre</b>	10	28	4	0	2	44
<b>Total</b>	19	46	115	19	70	269

### 1991

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/ Opera</b>	5	29	57	14	22	127
<b>Dance/</b>	3	2	10	0	4	19
<b>Theatre/</b>	7	21	3	0	2	33

<b>Traditional Theatre</b>						
<b>Total</b>	15	52	70	14	28	179

## 1992

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/Opera</b>	8	23	56	8	15	110
<b>Dance/</b>	3	0	4	1	6	14
<b>Theatre/Traditional Theatre</b>	10	12	2	0	1	25
<b>Total</b>	21	35	62	9	22	149

## 1993

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/Opera</b>	7	14	41	15	14	91
<b>Dance/</b>	5	3	1	1	1	11
<b>Theatre/Traditional Theatre</b>	8	7	2	0	3(PRC1)	20
<b>Total</b>	20	24	45	16	17	122

## 1994

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/Opera</b>	7	13	50	8	24	102
<b>Dance/</b>	7	1	1	0	3	12
<b>Theatre/Traditional Theatre</b>	9	6	3	0	1	19

<b>Total</b>	23	20	54	8	28	133
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## 1995

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/Opera</b>	6	15	47	6	11	85
<b>Dance/</b>	5	1	1	0	1	8
<b>Theatre/Traditional Theatre</b>	6	2	5	0	3(PRC1)	16
<b>Total</b>	17	18	53	6	15	109

## 1996

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/Opera</b>	10	10	50	13	14	97
<b>Dance/</b>	3	2	1	1	0	7
<b>Theatre/Traditional Theatre</b>	6	3	1	1	1	12
<b>Total</b>	19	15	52	15	15	116

## 1997

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/Opera</b>	9	11	32	13	14	79
<b>Dance/</b>	5	2	0	2	3	12
<b>Theatre/Traditional Theatre</b>	14	3	2	1	4(PRC4)	24
<b>Total</b>	28	16	34	16	21	115



## 1998

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	10	9	43	21	7	90
Dance/	2	0	1	0	2	5
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	14	3	2	1	3(PRC3)	23
Total	26	12	46	22	12	118

## 1999

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	6	14	34	22	6	82
Dance/	5	0	1	0	2	8
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	3	2	4	0	3(PRC2)	12
Total	14	16	39	22	11	102

## 2000

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	2	13	35	19	0	69
Dance/	7	0	0	0	3	10
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	6	4	4	0	6(PRC3)	20
Total	15	17	39	19	9	99

## 2001

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	10	6	34	18	11	79
Dance/ Physical Theatre	7	0	0	0	3(PRC1)	10
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	7	4	3	0	2(PRC1)	16
<b>Total</b>	24	10	37	18	16	105

## 2002

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	20	13	26	22	16(PRC1)	97
Dance/	5	1	0	0	1	7
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	18	5	2	9	3(PRC3)	37
<b>Total</b>	43	19	28	31	20	141

## 2003

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	16	13	42	15	15(PRC1)	101
Dance/	8	1	1	0	2	12
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	14	5	8	1	5(PRC1)	33
<b>Total</b>	38	19	51	16	22	146

## 2004

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	16	9	41	14	22	102
Dance/	5	2	0	1	4	12
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	16	3	4	0	10(PRC2)	33
<b>Total</b>	37	14	45	15	36	147

## 2005

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	13	10	27	19	17(PRC1)	86
Dance/	7	1	1	1	7(PRC2)	17
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	13	4	0	3	10(PRC2)	30
<b>Total</b>	33	15	28	23	34	133

## 2006

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	11	5	27	22	18(PRC1)	83
Dance/ New circus	5	1	1	2	9	18
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	10	4	2	5	8(PRC1)	29
<b>Total</b>	26	10	30	29	35	130

## 2007

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	14	8	30	20	12	84
Dance/ New circus/ Physical Theatre	12	1	0	2	5	20
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	8	9	0	2	3	22
<b>Total</b>	34	18	30	24	20	126

## 2008

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	15	3	47	13	12	90
Dance/	9	0	0	2	3	14
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	16	1	2	0	6	25
<b>Total</b>	40	4	49	15	21	129

## 2009

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	11	3	47	12	14	87
Dance/	11	0	1	4	5	21
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	13	6	0	1	4	24
<b>Total</b>	35	9	48	17	23	132

## 2010

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/ Opera</b>	12	6	36	16	11	81
<b>Dance/</b>	10	0	0	1	5	16
<b>Theatre/ Traditional Theatre</b>	6	3	5	2	7	23
<b>Total</b>	28	9	41	19	23	120

## 2011

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/ Opera</b>	11	2	41	19	13	86
<b>Dance/</b>	7	1	0	2	3	13
<b>Theatre/ Traditional Theatre</b>	15	2	0	1	8(PRC1)	26
<b>Total</b>	33	5	41	22	24	125

## 2012

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/ Opera</b>	5	0	36	21	14(PRC1)	76
<b>Dance/ Physical Theatre</b>	4	2	0	3	7	16
<b>Theatre/ Traditional Theatre</b>	9	4	3	2	9	27
<b>Total</b>	18	6	39	26	30	119

## 2013

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	7	0	38	23	20	88
Dance/	5	0	1	3	7	16
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	9	0	1	0	5	15
Total	21	0	40	26	32	119

## 2014

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	7	1	30	26	15	79
Dance/	10	0	0	2	3	15
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	8	4	0	3	8(PRC1)	23
Total	25	5	30	31	26	117

## 2015

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
Music/ Opera	7	3	32	12	9	63
Dance/	9	0	1	2	7	19
Theatre/ Traditional Theatre	8	0	3	1	7	19
Total	24	3	36	15	23	101

## 2016

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/ Opera</b>	9	1	29	17	14	70
<b>Dance/</b>	5	0	0	1	5	11
<b>Theatre/ Traditional Theatre</b>	7	0	4	3	6	20
<b>Total</b>	21	1	33	21	25	101

## 2017

	Taiwanese companies/artist			International collaboration	International companies/artist	Total
	Taiwanese element	Chinese element	International element			
<b>Music/ Opera</b>	14	0	30	19	13	76
<b>Dance/</b>	7	0	0	3	10 (PRC1)	20
<b>Theatre/ Traditional Theatre</b>	17	0	1	3	5	26
<b>Total</b>	38	0	31	25	28	122